FRAGMENTS

OF

POLITICS AND HISTORY.

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BY M. MERCIER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S

1615

ADVERTISEMENT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

I BEG my Readers to recollect, at each *article*, the *title* of this work; for neither have I found myſelf capable, nor have I the ambition to compoſe what is called a ſyſtem of government. To ſacrifice every thing to the *ſyſtem* which they frame, is the ordinary procedure of almoſt all political writers. It has not been mine: I have choſen merely to deliver in an independant manner my ideas on the ſubjects which ſo mightily intereſt us at preſent; I have contrived that facts ſhould ſome-

times ſupport opinions, and that reflections ſhould riſe out of facts. When every one contributes what he knows, he ſerves his country.

It muſt not, however, be preſumed, that each *article* is diſtinct, and entirely unconnected with the reſt; amidſt all this diſorder, real or apparent, an unity will be found in my political principles; it will at leaſt be ſeen what are my predominant ideas. I flatter myſelf that I ſhall always appear the ſincere friend of humanity, of liberty and equality. I aſpire to no other praiſes.

All theſe pieces are not new: I have taken care to collect thoſe which had moſt affinity with the immediate ſubjects of debate; and there are many others which I have merely retouched. It is not difficult to conceive that the revolution, of which I am a decided partizan, has given them a new tincture. He who advances not, retrogrades: nothing

thing is more certain than this axiom, eſpecially in the ſcience of politics.

Politics conſtitute the morality of nations; and taken in the moſt extenſive view, ſignify the knowledge of the means beſt adapted to frame laws evidently beneficial to the community. Laws are at laſt eſtabliſhed for the French; they ſought them in vain from their kings, who only iſſued commands.

Theſe fragments were compoſed nearly at the time when I publiſhed the *Portraits of the Kings of France**. The French conſtitution was yet a dream; and it then appeared to me a problem difficult to decide, among the different kinds of government, which is preferable with reſpect to the happineſs and tranquillity of nations. As natural policy, however, is immutable, and can invariably be applied to the immediate

* Four volumes, Neufchâtel, 1784.

ſtate of empires, it will be perceived that, amid a few errors, then unavoidable, I ſhall be found to have forcibly and obſtinately contended for true principles. If we have lately created and circulated an artificial property more precious than gold, it will be found, that I publiſhed an addreſs to the *Conſtituent Aſſembly* long before the decree they enacted for this purpoſe, and conformable to its ſpirit.

What I here publiſh is therefore a collection of all my antecedent ideas on political economy, which ſo many writers on the nature of government have perplexed with obſcure refinements: I have endeavoured to throw ſome light on the ſubject. As I have ever affirmed that names govern more than things, I have made it my particular endeavour to efface in my mind all the denominations habitual and familiar to politicians, the better to recognize, if it were poſſible,

ble, the *primitive elements* of all governments, and to determine whether each of them changed at different epochs and thence deſerved a particular name.

How eminently attracting are theſe grave ſtudies which comprehend the rights of men! I have felt, in compoſing theſe different pieces, the moſt exquiſite rapture from the perſuaſion that I ſhould baniſh oppreſſion, by my writings, from the face of the earth, and ſhould unite every arm againſt tyrants of every kind. The cultivation of theſe ſtudies, which tend to the noble regeneration of the human ſpecies, enlarges our mind, and extends the circle of our benevolence. No delight is purer, no ſentiment is more conſoling, than this which whiſpers that we may occaſionally contribute to the liberty and happineſs of our fellow creatures: Thus has God appointed the moſt raviſhing joys to reſide in the practice of the ſocial virtues, and even in the theory

of theſe engaging and important ideas. I adviſe every writer to apply himſelf to this ſubject; he will ſoon be convinced, that the ſcience which inſtructs men to live in ſociety has profounder charms than polite literature. Morality and politics are ſciences which blend themſelves with that of legiſlation, or rather conſtitute with it one ſcience alone; their benefits are daily exerciſed; and they deſerve, therefore, the preference above all the reſt. I repeat it: the heart which ſhall take that direction, will be rewarded even by the exerciſe of its happy toils.

I have long weighed theſe words of Rouſſeau: "The ſcience of government," ſays he, "is merely a ſcience of combination, of application, and of exception, according to times, places, and circumſtances." This paſſage has been the polar-ſtar, to direct my opinion in the moſt perplexing queſtions. I conceive, therefore,

therefore, that we have framed laws ſuited to our preſent condition.

The political machine goes on notwithſtanding its irregularities, on this account that the tie which binds men is the ſtrongeſt imaginable; and becauſe the harmony of ſociety depends not on certain laws delivered with a ſupercilious air. Fundamental principles are not deranged by a few ſhocks; and many defects do not yet aſſail public proſperity. Society reſts upon natural laws; and all that I have written tends to deſtroy the innumerable errors occaſioned by the words hitherto employed by politicians, and to bring back to their luminous baſes the vague principles of the ſcience of politics.

Governments are no other than human aſſociations, and theſe fluctuating aſſociations ought to reject all thoſe terms which miſlead, becauſe they are extremely inadequate to the expreſſion

of

of the relations, the ſhocks, and variations of ſtates, as well as of what they gain, or what they loſe, in force, in liberty, and in happineſs. I have attached, in this Collection of Fragments, the erroneous denominations by which the bulk of men, ever averſe to reaſoning, have been blinded, with reſpect to the true condition of nations.

THF AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

AT a crisis when all the states of Europe are threatened with political changes and convulsions, resulting from new doctrines and new theories on government and legislation, the sentiments of a great and celebrated writer, who shuns each extreme, and is the blind partizan of no cause, are of extreme importance. The production, a translation of which is now submitted to the Public, is from the pen of the author of the Picture of Paris, and of several other works which have acquired him a high reputation. In those of the fragments in which he has handled the various subjects of polity and legislation, he displays much historical learning: the facts he has separated from ancient and

and modern records, he converts, by the novel and juſt inferences he draws from them, into leſſons for kings and nations, as bitter againſt untried theories which are not warranted by any experience, as he is againſt ancient abuſes which no cuſtom can fairly authorize. The ſuggeſtions that have given riſe to many of the beſt regulations of civil polity embraced by the French revolutioniſts will be found in this work, at the ſame time that its author, in examining the meaſures of theſe new legiſlators, finds much to reprehend. Throughout the whole of the fragments a genuine philanthropy is manifeſted, and the cauſe of the oppreſſed boldly aſſerted. The tranſlator will only add, that thoſe who are the beſt informed in hiſtory, will find, in the facts brought forward in this work, a maſs of extremely curious information, conveyed in a diction at once nervous and agreeable.

Jan. 15, 1795.

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FRAGMENTS

OF

POLITICS AND HISTORY.

SOCIETY.

ARISTOTLE terms man a political animal, that is, an animal living in ſociety and reproducing the gifts of nature, capable of improvement, and conſequently endowed with a ſuſceptibility of the ſocial virtues.

Nature adopts ſociety, and even makes it an almoſt univerſal law. Far from degenerating in that ſtate, man becomes ſtronger, and protracts his exiſtence; and if a few individuals be cruſhed at the baſe of the pyramid, the bulk of the race enjoys life with more quiet and convenience.

Society is not an arbitrary or fortuitous inſtitution, but founded on the natural ties which unite man with his fellow creatures. It is obſerved, that thoſe ſpecies of animals are the hap-

piest which herd together. Thus bees, ants, and beavers seem to possess the greatest share of enjoyment.—The solitary beaver loses its sagacity and dexterity: and it is so with man.

But what advantage has a large society over a small one? An extensive empire is preferable to a petty state in this respect, that it restrains a greater number of men from quarrels and pretensions, the unavoidable consequences of the formation of society.

It has not the inconvenience of small states, which, in their collision, present a larger surface to the fury of discord. The more you parcel out the empire, the more quarrels you will breed. The mutual limits, being more contracted, will occasion a greater number of opposite interests; each district will form a sort of republic, actuated by a different spirit. Hence will arise endless wars; faction and rancour will become frequent in neighbouring cities whose interests are disunited; each party will repeatedly change its views, its masters, its standards. The human passions, more easily kindled, will have a more lasting fuel; and a perpetual agitation will be the fruit of the subdivision of empires.

The man of ambition (and such there are in every country) will no longer be restrained by a

power

power which forbids him every hope: he will dare to rear his head, and wield the inſtrument of death. The mighty body, which, by its ponderous maſs, cruſhed and ſtifled every violent ſcheme, now broken into a multitude of political bodies, will have a greater number of maſters, and thence more frequent diſputes. The flames of war will blaze forth in each of theſe little ſtates, and produce accumulated miſeries.

In a large government, the theatre of murders is erected on a diſtant ſpot, and the heart of the kingdom enjoys tranquility: The repercuſſion of war is hardly felt, and every man ſleeps without apprehenſion of beholding his walls ſcaled, his houſe a preyto flames, and his children butchered.

It is therefore neceſſary, that a ſtate ſhould be of a certain extent, that it may reap the real advantage which its ſituation ſecures. What is nobler than to ſee the privileges of two bordering provinces adjuſted by the ſovereign award of populous cities, themſelves ſubject to laws, like private individuals.

In all theſe diſputes no blood is ſhed; ten millions of men, who, in every other conjuncture, would infallibly have been employed in mutual carnage, are purified by an edict.

View all the ſavage hordes of the new world: they are a complication of little confederacies, which divide into endleſs branches. Peace they ſcarcely ever enjoy. When a ſpark lights upon a ſmall tribe, the fire ſpreads in all quarters.

But alas! every thing is balanced. The great misfortune of vaſt ſtates is, that they lean towards deſpotiſm. That immenſe force which maintains peace, being inſenſibly entruſted to a ſingle man, ſoon corrupts his heart. Standing alone and without controul, he abuſes his power. Through pride he plunges into wars, that produce the ſame miſeries which the ſtate would have ſuffered, if divided into ſmall cantons. His will is ſupreme, and he throws all into combuſtion. It is true that, by the failure of reſources, peace is more ſpeedily reſtored than in anarchy.

Large ſtates are, therefore, in all reſpects preferable to ſmall ones. Vaſt dominions, likewiſe, admit of the moſt freedom; the name of a ſubject becomes light when ſhared among twenty-four millions of men. Let us then declare for great empires, ſince liberty ſometimes haraſſes a republic till it is tired of its prerogatives.

If there were only two or three nations in Europe, peace would be incomparably more durable. In extending this idea, we find a new

and

and admirable plan. The epoch of the profperity of Europe will, perhaps, arrive, when this portion of the globe fhall have fubmitted to the authority of one juft and mild prince. With what rapidity would happinefs fpread over the whole extent of this fuperb monarchy! What vaft labours would be purfued! The empire would by its coherent mafs repofe in peace. All the weights and balances which compofe the complicated machine of republics, could never be comparable to this fimple and fingle mover, if infpired with juftice and beneficence. But, on the other hand, what means remain to be exhaufted, before fuch a throne be filled by a new monarch, active, vigilant, laborious, juft, and great!

Almoft all nations, the mere work of chance, ignorant in their origin, have adopted a primary error, of which they have not perceived the confequences with regard to pofterity. This error has become the bafis of the political code. Deceived by the event, a moft dangerous mafter, the legiflator has accommodated thefe inftitutions to the wants of the moment; and time, which accumulates the moft foolifh opinions, has far removed the happieft fyftem. Hence that incredible diverfity in the diftribution of power. The republics which appear in the world,

beſide thoſe countries where arbitrary power prevails, reſemble the traces of blooming health on a dead body, that have ſtill eſcaped the ghaſtly ravages of corruption.

In theſe times, when religious and political fanaticiſm is baniſhed from Europe, ſhall not a happy concurrence of circumſtances demonſtrate the glory of the human race in the majeſtic repoſe of an empire which will comprehend all Europe?

It would be a curious political problem to find the dimenſions of a kingdom ſuited to the genius of a ſovereign, and to the happineſs and repoſe of his people.

The more extenſive a ſtate is, the more is luxury ſupported by a larger number, and the lighter does the burden feel. Loſt amidſt the multitude, the individual perceives not ſo much the weight of power.

Great ſtates change their aſpect with the greateſt degree of rapidity. Amidſt all theſe tranſactions, which convulſe Europe and ſuſpend our timorous and uneaſy admiration, a ſlight fever, a fall from a horſe, ſweeps from the ſcene one of the principal actors, and produces a new combination of events and of ideas. What appeared impracticable, impoſſible yeſterday, is to-day effected with eaſe. The man

who

who yesterday was judged criminal, is to-day esteemed a virtuous citizen. Every thing changes in a day, because in great states the work of the passions is variable, and the first who puts them in play is in a manner absolute.

DEFECTIVENESS OF CERTAIN SCIENCES.

THE laws of attraction and repulsion are laws with the nature of which we are still unacquainted. How can we conceive that these two opposite powers should be so happily combined, as to produce all the wonders which we see? The Newtonian system does not enlighten our understanding: I perceive that it even contains impossibilities; and in a little time it will be exploded.

But of what importance are the ingenuity and parade of man in these lofty conceptions? Is it not better for him to live happy and good, since happiness is with him the main question?

A wise policy, which weakens necessary ills and multiplies benefits, is preferable to all these pompous systems of astronomy; for, I repeat it, the main question is happiness.

A wise policy enables man to display all his faculties; it resists the agents of destruction,

doubles our pleaſures, and confers on us a greater portion of happineſs than we had reaſon to expect. Through its continued vigilance its action is multiplied wherever it becomes moſt neceſſary; and it extends its reſources to beſtow on the unfortunate the benefits of ſociety.

Newton has determined that ſcarlet is not red; Malbranche that we live in a world in which there are no corpuſcles—nothing material. Be it ſo: I prefer to theſe fine things the injunction of the police not to pluck the blue-bottle in the corn fields during harveſt time.

ON MAN.

OVER the whole earth the want of ſubſiſtence has made man a covetous being; every where it has put arms in his hand, at one time to diſpute the grounds over-run with briars, at another the fields covered with corn, at another the retreat of the foreſts and the uncertain ſurface of the ocean. Nature has commanded him to ſtrip the globe or to periſh. He requires ſubſtances for food, for clothing, and for lodging: he has found means to tear iron from the bowels of the earth to ſubdue the brute creation, and has turned againſt himſelf that metal which gave him

him the dominion of the univerſe. It is nature which, beſtowing a voracious appetite, has enjoined him the carnage of other living creatures. He would die of hunger in three-fourths of the globe, if he had not contrived to fabricate the bow and harpoon, and to conſtruct a canoe, to go in queſt of fiſh. His exiſtence is founded on the deſtruction of a multitude of animals.

But laws intervene to eſtabliſh order in the moral world, to which the phyſical world is at laſt ſubjected. Laws eſtabliſh agriculture, induſtry, commerce, and the ſcience of government. Labour procures man enjoyment, and puts him in poſſeſſion of all the fertility of the earth: the fruit becomes the property of him who planted the tree. The arts, in their train, multiply the productions, and diſplay the liberality of nature. Man was entitled to every enjoyment; he was rendered happy. The laws of policy agreed ſometimes with thoſe of natural morality; all kinds of governments protected the induſtry of citizens, and eſtabliſhed juſtice as the only means of encouraging labour; finally, man, born to act, to enjoy all the advantages which he can procure by the exerciſe of his phyſical and moral faculties, owed his happineſs to the primœval laws, almoſt all originally caſt in juſt and uſeful moulds.

The ſtate of man was not then a ſtate of war, as Hobbes pretends. His primitive character diſpoſed him to anxiety, and conſequently to union. We cannot imagine freemen, ſcattered at great intervals over the globe, and ſeeking their mutual deſtruction. They would rather avoid each other, till ſome relation ſhould occur between them, and then would become more cloſely connected than the individuals of a poliſhed ſociety. No ſufficient reaſon can be diſcovered to prompt them to mutual maſſacre.

Far from wondering how men could collect in ſociety, we are aſtoniſhed that they could ſubſiſt a moment in the ſtate of nature. Inſtinct did not give birth to general ſociety, but only to particular aſſociations; and theſe connections are the moſt intimate.

General ſociety is only a ſlow aggregation of particular ſocieties. When the general ſociety diſunites, that is, when the ſpirit of faction begins, it is the ſame ſocial love (who would at firſt believe it!) which being too confined in its objects, becomes pernicious. This deſtroying principle ſprings from the natural affections, ſince it often diſſolves ſocieties by the ſame laws by which it formed them. It is the ſame propenſity which acts blindly; it is a legitimate paſſion, but which, from its being ill directed or too violent, engenders factions.

Men, far from esteeming each other equal, are all disposed to recognize a chief, from whom they are willing to receive laws. They all feel the necessity of government; they discover instinctively, that extreme liberty would produce extreme disorder; and human institutions are positively the institutions of nature.

If it were impossible for man to meliorate his condition, what advantage could he derive from that understanding which distinguishes him from the brutes. He set up a government, because he felt himself governed by his passions; he stretched out his hands to the enlightened man, because he felt himself ignorant, and judged that his inclination, directed by the intelligence of another, would be enabled to approach the natural order of things with greater certainty.

Let us not suppose that the principles of government are one of those chimeras engendered in the depths of metaphysics. The author of nature, after diffusing order on all sides, left not to chance the lot of humanity. Man, called to live in society, carries in his own breast the faculty of perceiving its moral laws, of combining them, of weighing their real utility in practice; and by considering those which can most influence his happiness, to form them at least into the science of government: by examining those

which moſt influence the mind, this knowledge, the moſt eſſential to man, muſt carry him to a high pitch of perfection, after having long wandered in the arts of curioſity. Truth every day advances a ſtep; and after ſo much light is ſtruck out, ſo many reflections acquired on this ſubject, there will undoubtedly reſult a brighter picture, of which we ſhall be enabled to comprehend the deſign and the plan. The ſpirit of philoſophy will then have reaſon to boaſt its having begun the happineſs of the whole human race.

The origin of that ſociety which we are in ſearch of, is to be found among the wandering tribes of the new world. There we behold how man aſſociates with man, and there we perceive the foundation of laws, the plan of legiſlators, and their views confined to the preſent moment.

Chieftains or leaders have every where preceded law-givers, becauſe the abuſe of reaſon is prior to the uſe of it. After ſuffering calamities through weakneſs, or ignorance, men grow wiſe by their neceſſities.

The individual will is often ſuſpicious, but the general will is always good, and can never deceive. By what ſign ſhall we know it? By the open call of the general and common intereſt.

IRON IN THE HAND OF MAN.

I LOVE to figure to myſelf the firſt operation of the arts upon the earth. Behold! the hatchet enters the foreſts, and the wild beaſts, ſtruck with alarm, abandon their dens to men, who, with iron and fire, open ſpacious alleys in woods where the earth, by the exuberance of her uſeleſs productions, becomes a burden to herſelf.

The rays of the ſun have purified the poiſoned ſoil, where the uprooted pines and old trunks, exhauſted by thick garlands of paraſitical plants, gave to vegetation a hideous aſpect: the marſhes, concealed beneath heaps of rotten leaves, bred hideous inſects; a vent is given to theſe ſtagnant waters. The air corrects the exceſſive humidity,—a temperature the moſt pernicious to our ſpecies. Habitations ariſe in the ſame ſpots from whence ferocious animals, lurking under the cluſtering boughs, darted out upon their prey.

Inſtead of the poiſonous plants on which the quadruped and man languiſhed alike, too near the green carpet of the fens, we now ſee the treaſures of a wholeſome and ſmiling huſbandry ſpring up! and ſportive flocks now gambol where

where the hideous ſerpent was wont to ſhed his venom.

Such in our own times were the operations of the American coloniſts, when they entered thoſe ſilent retreats that required the action of a free air and the quickening influence of the ſun, to purge the water and the earth.

The intention of the Creator, in beſtowing the arts, ſeems particularly to have provided the permanent means of aſſociating men. Human ſociety enters into the plan of God, not only as a certain effect, but as a principal object to which moſt other effects are meant to concur.

Without ſociety, there is no affinity, no virtue; no knowledge of the Great Being, of our own duties, of our capability of improvement, of the happy development of our intellectual faculties. What indeed is the human race, diſperſed, without morality, without notions of religion or virtue, knowing neither to admire nor to contemplate the wonders of the creation? Society gives the neceſſary inſtruction to man; and to the proſperity which it affords in this world, it joins the hope of a future felicity in a new order of things. For the great and ſublime idea of final cauſes diſcloſed itſelf only in improved ſociety, in which we perceive the concurrence of the rays of eternal wiſdom.

To endeavour to prove that the condition of the people of Europe is leſs deſirable than that of the Caribs or Hottentots; or that the man who exerciſes the arts is leſs happy merely by reaſon of his employment; that if all his knowledge were confined to run, to leap, to wreſtle, to throw a ſtone, to climb a tree, and all his occupation to ſatisfy the cravings of nature, and then, void of thought, to ſlumber at the foot of a tree;—this, I ſay, is to play on the ſurface of things for the ſake of diſplaying a brilliant eloquence.

The arts and ſciences have doubtleſs their inconveniences; but are theſe inconveniences to be put in competition with the advantages which reſult from them? Can they be compared with the evils which follow the neglect of them? When men were without the arts, they were obliged, like famiſhed wolves, to ſally forth from their retreats in purſuit of prey. They were continually engaged in deſtroying each other, that they might not be deſtroyed by famine. Hence the inundation of thoſe barbarous hordes, which fear could no longer confine on the ſhores of the ocean, or behind the mountains of the north. They migrated perpetually from their barren abodes to the regions of the ſouth, and there deſtroyed every thing, till they were deſtroyed themſelves.

Notwithſtanding all the bleſſings which nature has laviſhed on man, he would have remained poor and miſerable, without the benefit of political laws, which increaſe the force and enjoyment of a people, which baniſh famine, which break the yoke of ſlavery, and laſtly, which inſtruct individuals concerning their reſpective rights.

Wiſe political laws collect into a focus abundance and liberty, and prevent men from becoming the ſlaves of their fellows! Political laws alſo, by confining nations within prudent limits, hinder them from ruſhing againſt each other. Small tribes are ſubject to this accident, as well as mighty ſtates, when the means of ſubſiſtance are not founded on the ſocial laws.

Let us conclude, therefore, that men are only unhappy becauſe they are not ſufficiently induſtrious.

FALSE SIMILITUDE.

TO compare a ſtate to the human body is a ſimilitude which, repeated a thouſand times, has been the ſource of aſtoniſhing errors. Mennius's ſtory is ingenious; but ought we to compare political bodies with the human body,

in which all the parts are connected and have a neceſſary correſpondence, inſomuch, that when one part ſuffers the whole ſuffers of courſe? Is not this a moſt groſs abuſe of ſimilitudes? I, who am a ſubject, am never ſo near to the ſovereign as the toe is to the diaphragm; and does the ſovereign really ſuffer when I ſuffer, as is ſure to be the caſe in the animal economy? When the royal ſtomach digeſts does the chyle flow to me? Theſe old compariſons are ſo very faulty in reaſonable application, that they ought to be entirely abandoned; and by ſuch images as theſe weak minds have been led into very great errors.

It is certain that a ſtate ſhould form but one whole; it is, however, uſually compoſed of two powers, which, by their contention, maintain an equilibrium. Theſe powers are kept in equipoiſe by a third; and while in the human body a healthful ſtate cannot be other than univerſal, it is not poſſible in the ſocial body for an equality of enjoyments to ſubſiſt. With thoſe who think correctly diſputes are not laſting; and it ſtrikes me that in a political argument the ſimilitude of Mennius will be no longer quoted.

In a State there are unremittingly a flux and reflux of power. The progreſſion from one form

of government to another, although insensible, is real; and laws, as well as the basis of fundamental principles, are subject to variations.

Under the tyranny of Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero, Rome still gloried in the title of Republic: it once more became effectually such under the dominion of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, although these were sovereigns. It had also its days of liberty during the reign of Gallienus; and when thirty men disputed the sovereign authority for the space of seven or eight years, its military democracy was productive of less mischief than the despotisms of Caligula and Nero.

It has been said that every State has its birth, its virile season, and its old age. These images carry with them a tendency to error; the forms indeed change, but the earth, the soil, and the inhabitants are still the same. An empire is sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker; it is re-established, it predominates, and it carries the same name, while its constitution is no longer the same.

The intemperate love of liberty may precipitate its heedless partizans into slavery. The most salutary laws may be converted into poison. In politics general principles are nugatory and evidently false.

True liberty does not confift in having no dependance on any authority; but is compatible with reftraining laws. When the fovereign himfelf is obliged to conform to laws to which the rich fubjects are made to bow, I can pronounce without hefitating: this government is not a bad one.

What have thofe gained who live under your laws? This is the queftion I fhall put to every government. Whatever name it may bear, if the fubjects tell me—"we are not difcontented"—if I hear thefe words, I fay, I fhall praife even defpotifm.

When I fhall perceive in any nation that the taxes have been fo diminifhed as to be fcarcely felt, I fhall fay: here a father reigns. If the burthens are heavy, and the people bear them without murmuring, I fhall fay: this nation is free and enlightened. But if a nation groan under its taxation, ftill fuppofing it, however, fupportable, I fhall fay: thefe people do not love their country; here each individual thinks folely of himfelf.

On the fubject of government there are innumerable theories, all of them very good upon paper. They are fuited to every character and to every difpofition. The theory of the economifts is juft as good as that of Plato: each of

these would ſway the world, provided the world would allow itſelf to be ſo governed; but the miſchief is, that it requires phyſical powers to keep it conſtantly in action.

Moral ideas come next. Theſe have great weight, but not until they are blended with the ſelf-moving powers of an empire.

Governments are ſubject to diſeaſes and revolutions occaſioned by the law of friction. Experience, reaſonings, and the moſt admirable theories are here of no avail, ſince the political movements will have their uſual courſe.

Would it be ſufficient to have reared the edifice of public liberty, if the legiſlature were not afterwards to ſecure the private liberty of the meaneſt of the citizens? If the depoſitary of the public force can diſpoſe of a citizen according to the caprices of his grandeur, or if the credit and fortune of individuals hinge entirely on the will of a prince, then is the dignity of man degraded. Man ſhould have no other judges than his equals; but ſuch a privilege is rarely to be met with, becauſe the conqueſt and maintenance of it are difficult. In the conſtitution of every government this is the moſt eſſential point to be obtained: now if this danger be foreſeen and obviated for ever by the law; if this ſacred and terrible power belong ſolely to the tribunals which

which are a check on authority, court favour, and intrigue, then are the powers of the ſtate happily combined, and then does ſocial order ſubſiſt.

The *habeas corpus* act paſſed in England in the thirty-firſt year of the reign of Charles II. is effectually the triumph of the Britiſh legiſlation, and to every mind capable of reflecting on theſe profound ſubjects, muſt appear the *chef-d'œuvre* of policy, wiſdom, and humanity.

Let any nation whatever obtain ſuch a law, and every uſeful reform will be found to ſpring from it. But ſo noble a conqueſt, which reſtores to every man his natural dignity, can belong to a nation alone already diſpoſed to feel all its juſtice and all its importance.

This celebrated act is in a manner become the ſecond *magna charta* of the Engliſh: on ſo important an occaſion they have given no ſcope to an arbitrary will. We are far from thoſe great and precious formalities which remind princes that every puniſhment arbitrarily awarded is a violation of the ſocial compact. We have allowed the encreaſe of this power, already ſo terrible by the aſſumption of the executive authority, of a power ſo alarming which it is not difficult to abuſe. We have, however, by our verbal diſcourſes and writings made ſome

resistance; and with all the zeal of patriotism, and all the eloquence which is inspired by the love of humanity, have unceasingly intimidated those who have been appointed the arbiters of the lot of others. Illegal imprisonments have been latterly less frequent, and the whole nation has, as it were, become witness to the actions of the prince, tacitly requiring of him an account of the exercise of his redoubtable authority.

Why has the fine kingdom of Poland, notwithstanding all its advantages, been unable to attain the rank of a respectable power? Because the rights of man are there essentially violated by the privileges of the grandees, and because the different parts of which the Polish constitution is composed, bearing too unequally on each other, prevent the establishment of an equilibrium. No vigour can be looked for in a nation of which two thirds of the inhabitants are in a state of perpetual degradation: under such circumstances the nobility, having no longer any moderation, harass the people, and display to the world the constant spectacle of intestine divisions. To regenerate such a kingdom would require its entire subversion, since no efficacious police can be established in a state, unless there be a just equipoise between the different

orders of which that ſtate is compoſed. When, on the other hand, the equilibrium is entirely deſtroyed, it is impoſſible for any individual to contribute towards the public weal; and the deſtruction itſelf of the government is preferable to that ſtagnation by which the police is utterly corrupted.

The writers who have inveſtigated the formation of ſocieties among men, have ſome of them recurred to chance, others to fear, or a compulſory force. While ſociety exiſts, according to the firſt appointment of nature, they have made all the cauſes to conſiſt in the reproducion and preſervation of the human ſpecies. But love, and the deſire of mutual aſſiſtance, appear to me to have formed the firſt bond of union.

SUPPOSITION.

IT is a whimſical idea, but nevertheleſs inſtructive, to imagine on a ſudden the adminiſtrators of ſtates entirely vaniſhed. Aſſuredly, governments would not be diſſolved, ſtill leſs ſociety; yet the adminiſtrators believe that every thing is performed by themſelves.

The people, upon this ſuppoſition, would ſuddenly require a new legiſlative authority.

 The

The change of perſons would hardly be perceived, ſo permanent is the original form of ſocieties. Anarchy is ſo contrary to the natural order of things, that the bonds of ſociety form and extend of themſelves. Is there a government in the world without laws? What ridiculous folly in certain miniſters of ſtates, to fancy that without them ſociety would only be a confuſed multitude, without order and without union! Men obey, becauſe they have a law engraved on their heart, and becauſe the tranſgreſſor ſeeks only to diſſemble, and not to juſtify his crime.

Other miniſters, filled with ſome chimerical notions, imagine that the people being ignorant, it would expoſe the ſtate to total ruin, if their preſumptuous ſyſtem were ſhaken. They know not, that ſince books have been diffuſed, and even without books, the people are, by tradition alone, prepared to become their own legiſlators, to ſacrifice much on the one hand, in order to gain on the other. Inſtinct enlightens the moſt ignorant in moments of ſignal importance, and never are they miſtaken during great revolutions. Hiſtory fully confirms this maxim. Notwithſtanding grievous ſubjects of complaint and diſcontent, the people will not proceed to radical changes, to the abolition of royalty, for example,

in great ſtates; for the people, I repeat it, will endure many oppreſſions. They may be ſaid to be philoſophical, ſince they bear with certain unjuſt and vexatious laws, for the ſake of others which are great and ſublime; they may be ſaid to have made every allowance for human frailty in the conduct of their adminiſtrators; they conſent not to bear the name of rebels till they have ſufficient pretext, and ſufficient force to ſanctify that title: then they introduce the ſtate of war, and, well knowing that thereby they expoſe themſelves to great misfortunes, they direct their attacks againſt an oppreſſive authority, which, they aver, is not founded on their conſtitution or laws of government: they may be miſtaken about words, but their reaſonings are ſound, for they feel the neceſſity, amidſt the moſt terrible dangers, of forming anew the ſocial compact. If weak, they murmur, they exclaim, they contemn, they deteſt; if powerful, they eſtabliſh the balance, and exult in the victory.

And who were the firſt legiſlators? Men, who the day before were branded with the appellation of rebels. Would obedience be honourable, were it altogether paſſive? I ſee the people every where more diſpoſed to ſuffer than to reſiſt, and for this I admire and reſpect them: nothing ſeems more oppoſite to their ideas than

a revolt, and when that period arrives, I am almoſt tempted to believe, that the reſiſtance is lawful, and that they have been oppreſſed by a thouſand inviſible hands.

Two or three men may be led aſtray by their paſſions, and hurried into diſorders, which riſe to the level of their pride. But when a whole people are unhinged and thrown into violent commotion, a people who expoſe an ample front to ſo many wounds, and among whom the re-union of power is ſo difficult; they muſt have been ſorely and deeply haraſſed and abuſed. Alas! muſt the people always be expoſed to the fury of avarice and the cruelty of oppreſſion? Reſiſtance, that is reaction, becomes, therefore, inevitable in many circumſtances. Every thing has its limits, and as Locke ſays, the ſupreme power, whatever it may be, returns to the community.

ORIGINAL FOUNDATION.

GOVERNMENTS are analogous to the force of the ſentiments which gave them birth: the Romans were conquerors, becauſe the firſt founders were robbers; China, founded on the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of humanity, ſubſiſts by the

the immutability of its rights. Religious nations are diſtinguiſhed by a fanatical attachment to their creed. Thus every people finds the ſource of its polity in the work of nature: The manners of the Greeks and Romans were the moſt faithful pictures of their governments. The national body will repreſent the ancient legiſlation.

Political principles are only good in proportion as their baſis is eſtabliſhed on the real manners of a people.

The parallel of the preſent ſtate of Europe, with that of the other parts of the earth, would throw a clear light upon the conqueſts of the Romans; and it would be perceived whether the univerſe has gained or loſt by this great revolution.

Governments derived their origin from natural ſentiment; they were, at firſt, unacquainted either with principles, or the public exerciſe of theſe ſentiments; they had an impreſſion of the moral idea of juſtice, and of the abſtract notion of liberty. The authority of reaſon gave place to a political eſtabliſhment. This is eaſily conceived; but in whatever he does, man advances ſtep by ſtep. I aſſign to the art of government, the ſame origin as to all the other arts; it is nature that ſupplies the hints. An intelligent

intelligent man profits by theſe, and collects the local diſpoſitions under one point of view. Obſerve that all the ancient ſtates valued themſelves upon a ſingle legiſlator. Thus, in thoſe remote times, the action of unity upon the maſs of men's minds was felt in the ſame manner as, in poliſhed ages, national pride is inſpired by a writer, a law-giver, a conqueror. Hardly can the Egyptian decypher the inſcriptions which declare his paſt greatneſs, and the reſt of the earth extols the country which has ſubmitted to the yoke of the Ethiopeans, of the Perſians, of the Greeks, of the Romans, of the Arabs, of the Circaſſians, and of the Turks.

But it is ridiculous, in modern authors, to ſpeak of ancient conſtitutions, and to propoſe them as models, when gun-powder, mechanics, the mariner's compaſs, tactics, the arts, and Chriſtianity have produced a total change of circumſtances. What reſemblance has Lacedemon to Paris? What would Lycurgus ſay, if tranſported to Verſailles?

The ſcience of politics is verſatile in its nature, and ſhould vary like the calendars. I can conceive a ſtate to be in ſuch a predicament, that it may and ought to change ſuddenly its political and religious laws; as was ſeen at the period of the reformation, when principles, the

moſt

moſt generally received, were aboliſhed and annihilated, and, as was neceſſarily the caſe, with impetuoſity of deciſion.

ON THE NEW-MODELLING OF LAWS.

WHAT are called conſtitutive laws, are the actual baſis of the conſtitution. General conſent, and common opinion, form political laws; as, if they contradict the firſt formation of the ſtate, they become no leſs inſtitutive, or fundamental laws, when they accord with the general wiſh of the nation; the monarch cannot abrogate the laws by which he holds his crown; but there is no doubt that the authority of the nation can change old laws, or old cuſtoms, whenever the public utility requires them to be annulled.

The firſt of all laws is, that which ſets the ſafety of the public before every other conſideration.

Thus, theſe fundamental laws are not fixed on an eternal baſis, ſince new circumſtances, a great change of manners, or phyſical revolutions may direct important alterations. Men, in forming laws for the public utility, have reſerved to themſelves the right of deſtroying theſe ſame laws, when the ſame utility requires it.

A general new-modelling becomes much eaſier in ſome criſes, than the correcting of certain ſecondary laws, becauſe theſe, being derived from the conſtitutive laws, open a wide field to diſputes and contradictions; whereas a total reform repels all the inconveniences of the eſtabliſhed laws, and brings forward a legal ſyſtem, great, magnanimous, and ſalutary. It will always be more difficult to find expedients to reform a defective law, than to demoliſh it at once with a ſudden craſh; but it is only the political laws which can be overturned in this manner, becauſe, like thoſe ſuperb obeliſks, compoſed of a ſingle block, they muſt either be ſet erect, or laid level with the ground.

Thus, ſtates have their viciſſitudes; but when they do not undergo a thorough regeneration, or meet not with ſkilful founders, it were better for them to continue according their primitive inſtitution.

RECIPROCAL RIGHTS.

THERE are no ſocieties without reciprocal rights, and, notwithſtanding, in the midſt of ſo many individual and legitimate rights, there can be but one ſole authority. This authority ought,

ought, however, to be made up of the national ſpirit, that is to ſay, of its conſent. In ſuch a caſe, the voice of a ſupreme authority legally obliges each individual to rally round it, ſo as to form a collective force; and the government becomes merely an aſſociation of ſeveral phyſical powers, united to ſubdue other phyſical powers that may refuſe to follow the general movement. The will of the legitimate government becomes a point of union for all the other wills, and for all the other powers; and it ought, and muſt enforce obedience by its phyſical ſtrength. In its final analyſis, eſſential order admits of but one ſole authority; but after all the contentions which ſhall attempt to define, in ſome degree, the law that is to regulate it, government will ſpring up at the cloſe of the combat, between the paſſion of ruling, and that of being free, both of them equally natural to man. The moſt abſolute authority becomes legal, when it ariſes triumphantly out of the contention of all the individual intereſts; theſe will be blended with the general intereſt; and the power will be juſtly placed in the hands of a chief, in ſuch a way as, that the principle of unity in the government will be appreciated and adopted by all. Great diſaſters uſually give birth to a deſpot, on this account, that he is obliged to abuſe the

power delegated to him, when the intereſt of the ſociety requires him to ſtrike a terrible blow, that ſhall ſubſtitute the reign of the law for the tempeſtuous paſſions which are ſubverſive of all order and of all police. When the miſchief is over, this very deſpot, to whom the habit of command is become eſtimable, ought to be ſubdued. He was a ſaviour, but he becomes a tyrant, if he refuſes to ſheath the ſword with which he inflicted vengeance on the enemies of their country. Thus is there, ſometimes, but a ſmall diſtance between a hero and an uſurper; ſuch was Cæſar, and ſuch was Cromwell. It is the ſupreme effort of human virtue generouſly to reſign the power, and make a ſacrifice to one's country, after having avenged its wrongs, or ſaved it from imminent peril: in an enlightened age, however, and when the attention of the whole univerſe is fixed on a ſingle man, glory alone can recompenſe him for a ſacrifice like this. Such, in our days, has been in his retreat, the American General, Waſhington!

If we examine the ſpirit of ſocieties, we ſhall ſee that they tend, by their very nature, to the maintenance and ſecurity of the independence and equality of men. This equilibrium may be deranged by perſonal intereſt, but it will be re-eſtabliſhed: the individual dies, while the ſpe-

cies

cies labours for the general preſervation. While force acts on the one hand, art inſenſibly acts in a contrary direction on the other; and, in an enlightened nation, liberty blends itſelf in a ſenſible way with ſlavery, corrodes its ſhackles, and points out to Man the means of ſhaking it off with addreſs. We have better times to look up to: human intelligences, conſtantly increaſſing, dictate new laws to ſtateſmen, who cannot refuſe what their country expects from them, without expoſing themſelves to the ſcandal of the public.

The French will never be entirely ſubjugated: the ſpirit of the old legiſlation of the Franks, is a ſpirit of natural independance; they were willing to be led, not governed and condemned; nor would they admit the right of any one over their life and their perſon.

PRIMITIVE RIGHT.

IT was a lawful act; for a body of men wanting women had a right to provide themſelves, and to take them from their neighbours who could ſpare them. Force was then the cry at once of nature and of the right of nations. What a ſtate does from real neceſſity and for

its preſervation, becomes a ſupreme law; but never was there perhaps a motive ſo powerful and ſo juſt as that which at that time actuated the Romans. And why was this rape never ranked among unwarrantable violences? Plainly, becauſe it was conſiſtent with the law of nature.

There are caſes, (they are indeed rare,) when miſery can juſtly have recourſe to force alone. Famine, peſtilence, and ſhipwreck warrant laws, which are not inconſiſtent with juſtice, though they offend charity. Such is the right of neceſſity; but it is ſo terrible, on examination, that it ſhould be covered with a veil, as a precipice is ſkreened which the eye dares not to explore.

Some countries expel the ſtranger who has been driven from his home, and deny him a retreat. If all the world were to repel him alike, could he live in the air? Muſt not a man inhabit ſome where on the globe? And has he not a right to do ſo? The nation from which he entreats an aſylum, therefore treats him unjuſtly and cruelly, if in place of reſtraining and watching him, it commands him to leave its territories. The water, the air, and the earth belong to all men; and the inconvenience which property may ſuſtain, can never excuſe the inhumanity

manity of him who refuses his fellow a share in the patrimony of primœval society.

Penal laws alone have a right to drive a person from one country to another; and this act appears to me the most terrible exercise of their power.

For the same reason, no equitable law can hold by force a member of the society who wishes to go elsewhere in search of happiness. Every man has a right to choose his country, because happiness being the natural end to which every man aspires, each is free to join what society he pleases. If the citizen is blameable for forsaking the place of his birth, the state which seeks to retain its subject, would show its weakness, and after all obtain a bad citizen.

European states forming in a manner the bulb of the thermometer, what matters the fluctuation of the individuals? When the natural ties are insufficient, we need no longer talk of the political ties, which lose their force when we attempt to overstrain them. The state may indeed recal its subjects, and may punish them by the confiscation of their goods. But it ought to respect the liberty of the individual; nor could he have any merit in loving his country, if he were not permitted to adopt another.

What can we think of a government, which

rendering men wretched, and ſtripping them of every thing, reſtrains them from going to breathe in a milder aſylum, and which ſets up barriers to hold them in miſery and ſervitude.

OF IMPRESCRIPTIBLE RIGHTS.

IT is inconteſtable, that the nation is the legiſlative power, and that it needs in addition an executive power alone.

All the efforts of a writer ſhould be directed to enlighten the firſt. If an author is inhibited from ſpeaking, it will be inferred, that what he had to ſay was for the advantage of the public.

Men, who uſually act not from principle, would ſtill act if knowledge were to be more diffuſed.

A guardian ſovereignty will always be reſpected; a rapacious ſovereignty will always be combated and eluded.

The right of man is to enjoy his greateſt poſſible felicity.

Let not the laws of ſociety contradict the laws of nature, for theſe are perfection itſelf. In ſociety man loſes not his rights, he extends them to every thing.

The human race never choſe to give itſelf maſters;

mafters; it elected chiefs to guard and protect the refpective properties. The laws of nature exhibit the complete plan of a happy government.

Such an error is ufeful, you may reply. But the fharper who fells me copper for gold, a pafte for a diamond, blinds me into an error which has its advantages. Am I therefore the lefs cruelly undeceived, when I carry the trinket to the jeweler, when I behold my poverty and the immenfe lofs that I have fuftained?—While the illufion lafts, he who is deceived fancies himfelf ftrong and powerful, but his confidence foon yields to weaknefs and defpair. Thus, all thofe nations who derived an artificial force from prejudices, have funk into defpicable flaves, below the term of human debafement.

Thefe pious frauds are always frauds that apply not to the full extent defired; and when the imaginations of a people are ftored with fuch chimerical phantoms, the firft enthufiaft who takes the trouble, may give a direction to the errors. They are led on to murder, to carnage, to crimes of every kind, becaufe the light is extinguifhed which would guide them to gentle manners.

What multitudes have been butchered to cement opinions which had not the fmalleft rela-

tion to morality ? Does not the moſt rigid and moſt ſuperſtitious religion, in our own times, receive into its boſom the greateſt number of uſurers and robbers ?

Good civil laws which cramp not the liberty of man, and repreſs nothing but uſurpation ; theſe alone are deſirable. All hereſies ſpring from thoſe antiquated abſurd dogmas, which can gain credit only among the moſt barbarous and brutal people.

Have we not known lawyers aſſert that a kingdom was the patrimony of a ſingle man, and feed him with this prepoſterous idea ? Have not others ſhown happineſs to man, as a bird-catcher ſhows a mirror to larks ? The net was ſpread below, and when men tried to burſt through, they were reckoned criminal. All the framers of codes have turned aſide from civil rights.

Writers ſhould therefore exert themſelves to reſtore to man his dignified and noble character ; for ignorance ought either to be total, abſolute, and profound, or ſhould ceaſe altogether. Happineſs, ſays Dr. Swift, conſiſts in enjoying the ſatisfaction of being properly overreached. But what may ſuit an individual, will not ſuit a nation.

It is ſaid with an ironical air, what ! are wri-

ters kings, to make legiſlators? But does not the artiſt who conſtructs compaſſes, teleſcopes, and other neceſſary inſtruments, perform a ſervice to geometry and geometers? How could they cultivate the ſciences without theſe implements?

May we not judge of the merit of thoſe who govern by the ardour of the attachment which each individual entertains for his country? Thoſe periods of the commonwealth are the moſt proſperous which afford the livelieſt demonſtrations in its favour; nor ſhould we boaſt the exterior decoration which beſtows brilliancy on a ſtate, but the inward ſatisfaction which the citizen feels.

The primitive conſtitution of ſtates did not, neither could it oppoſe independance.

To begin the hiſtory of nations with the deſpotiſm of an individual, is to ſet reaſon at defiance. Savage tribes, (and from them, all nations have had their origin) are never ſubject to controul. In the earlieſt inſtitution of ſocieties, man paid obedience with no other view than to procure a reciprocal obedience from thoſe entruſted with the governing powers. A conſiderable time was required to bend a great ſociety beneath a ſingle force. The courage of an infant people, is a ſure guide to us, and, be-

caufe it is diftinct, is not the lefs juft and profound at this period.

Inftinct makes up for the want of reflection, and in the fequel, it can only be replaced by an affemblage of all forts of knowledge, at a time when civilized nations are obliged to defend themfelves againft the defpotifm which rifes out of the arts.

There exifts not, nor can there exift a ftate whofe form is really fuch as it is conceived to be in fpeculation.

The few govern the many; but it is neverthelefs true in fact, that in procefs of time, the many overawe the few.

Man is a focial being; which is evident, becaufe he is naturally difpofed to limit his own rights, in order to leave to others a free exercife of theirs. He has therefore feen in a direct way, the general intereft of the human fpecies: and this is manifeft even in the moft imperfect legiflations.

Extreme political perfection is impracticable. All thofe fublime plans digefted on paper can never be realized. When the machine muft be conftructed and put in motion, we fhould reflect, that no direction can be given to it without a collifion of the human paffions.

In all the fyftems, ancient and modern, the

details are conſtantly happier and juſter than the amount of the whole.

There is no evil in the political order, but which may be turned to good; and to ſupply the want of public morals, great ſocieties have invented a ſpring, which under the name of honour, has a powerful efficacy, and acts as forcibly as virtue itſelf.

The ideas of men of ſuperior underſtanding, acquiring a dominion over the mind, become ſentiments, and are ſoon converted into laws. But there are ſome of theſe notions which ought ſtill to remain under the veil, becauſe the preſent ſtate of ſociety is not prepared either to conceive them well, or to adopt them profitably.

Such conceptions a writer is permitted to whiſper to ſages, and to cover them with a ſort of myſterious obſcurity, thus to avoid the reproaches, without betraying the rights of auguſt truth. The empire of perſuaſion, though it ſacrifices its force and its luſtre by delaying the moment of triumph, will loſe none of its influence.

Under any political form ſoever which civilization may eſtabliſh, the natural rights muſt never be extinguiſhed in the civil; the legiſlation would otherwiſe be faulty, and the individuals oppreſſed and wretched.

To

To aſſert that the natural right is oppoſed to the civil, is to advance a monſtrous abſurdity, to ſink the character of man inſtead of raiſing it, and to take away his happineſs inſtead of confirming it. Alas! of what import to man are thoſe conſtitutions prepared with ſuch ſhow, that oſtentation of wiſdom, and thoſe laws, the production of ages, if all this diſplay is only to oppreſs him, and afforded no conſolation in the journey of life?

The aſſemblies of March and of May, theſe ſolemn diets, have been common among all nations, becauſe ſovereignty was originally derived from the people. Then, the monarch was only a captain. He appointed the officers about his own perſon; while the honours of the ſtate were conferred by the national ſuffrage. But after the bounds of the French empire were extended, it behoved the many to obey the few. The biſhops and feudal lords took charge of the government, and the kings or captains, who had dreaded the aſſemblies of the people, ſaw themſelves, though too late, deprived of their firmeſt ſupport; for every nation, enjoying the privilege of arms, will invariably elect a chief.

The aboliſhing of the order of commons gave riſe to a body which has ſometimes appeared inimical to the monarch, but above all, to

the people. This body would gladly ſet itſelf on a level with the ſovereign of the nation, and at the ſame moment, it pretends to humble the third eſtate: it is diſpoſed to make the monarch a Venetian doge, and the people a beaſt of burden. It perpetually ſkulks behind the treaſury and the church, to purloin the riches: it muſt receive the large ſums deſtined to elevate royalty; and it would fain wreſt from the monarch the noble privilege of diſpenſing honour. Preſent merit, according to it, is nothing, it meanly ſollicits a recompenſe for the paſt. Kings know not how to rid themſelves of this crowd of beggars, who, in the midſt of their pretended regard, ſay that the capetians ſtill reign.

Theſe degenerate nobles, without fixt property, and deſtitute of power, regain by cunning what they had loſt; they deſpiſe living merit for ancient chimeras; and they would fain perſuade us that the conſtitution of the ſtate reſts upon their diſtinctions; they forget the commons, as if the people never had exiſted. Formerly the great lords went to court to diffuſe widely their wealth; at preſent they dun inceſſantly, and whatever touches them muſt be ſacred.

OF

OF DISTANT GOOD OR THE VAIN PRETEXT.

NO ſudden change ſhould be made in the condition of citizens, even what might ſeem the moſt neceſſary. And why? Becauſe we ought not to haraſs the preſent generation, which muſt quickly paſs away; it conſiſts one half of men in the middle or near the end of their courſe, and who conſequently will ſoon ſleep in the tomb.

I appeal to any ſober thinking perſon: is it allowable to rob them of their repoſe, to moleſt their exiſtence for a diſtant good, to attack their little property, and to ſacrifice them to an uncertain futurity? What is futurity to that multitude of men who come into the world to toil and to die? Ought not politics to act as does the dial, which points out to all this inſcription, *memento mori*. Alas! what matters to thoſe who have grown old, the great and future deſtiny of an empire? They are placed in the preſent moment, and it is the preſent moment that politics ought to have in view. That ſyſtem of politics is falſe and criminal which reckons not up the minutes that compoſe the life of a frail and ſentient being; 'tis the hour which nature has granted, the hour which to that being is dear.

dear. The reſt is the dream of pride; and when miniſters talk of the ſucceeding age, they pronounce the words of bold quackery.

As the hand muſt tremble which traces the rapid order of theſe changes, ſo the examination of the different impreſſions which operate on men, ſhould make us ſhudder at diſturbing the foundations of their preſent felicity.* Alas! muſt we be reminded of the old and trite proverb, "Poſterity will provide for itſelf." A ſenſible proverb which our grave ſtateſmen ſeem to have forgotten. And, if by phyſical and mathematical laws, the diſſolution of the globe were to take place in three years, what would become of the ſuperb ſpeculation of thoſe, who, neglecting the men already born, beſtow their whole attention on the future race?

That polity which tyrannizes over the preſent generation, to uſher in poſterity with more proſperous days, is plainly falſe. The miniſter who conſiders the ſtate he governs as immortal, is evidently miſtaken.

Nature acts upon empires; and do we not even now obſerve that the progreſs of events deſtroys all the plans which comprehend too vaſt a field?

Hence alſo ſpring up the chimeras which are honoured by the name of foreſight. There is

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nothing but what is ſubject to time. To attempt beſtowing an eternal permanence on political ſprings, is to forget that the friction of the clock of ages deranges the principles which are regarded as fundamental baſes.

New ſituations will riſe out of the political order; and if it is difficult to foreſee particular events, how much more thoſe political deviations of which all kingdoms preſent variegated examples?

The foreſight of the moſt enlightened man yields to the chance which deranges the calculation. The ſtateſman becomes a viſionary when he neglects the preſent to enter into fortuitous combinations, which flatter ſelf-love, but offend reaſon.

Amidſt this confuſion of ideas which tend to mar the wiſeſt deſigns, it is altogether neceſſary that a body of men ſhould watch over the conſtitutional principles, the ſecret movers of the life of empires. The part of the nation which inſtructs either by its information or by its energetic pictures, will oppoſe a bank to the inundation of theſe political vices and errors, which continually ſubſtitute temerity and hazard to the unſhaken baſis of wiſdom and reflection.

It is this body which will declare aloud that the polity founded on experience is perhaps the beſt

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and the moſt certain. As human actions are pretty uniform, this experimental polity follows them with attention. It wants a certain luſtre, but is therefore the more ſolid. It appears more ſolicitous to prevent immenſe evils, than to give birth to great diſtant benefits. It does not readily promiſe a felicity which nature has almoſt every where denied to man, but occupies itſelf about the means of rendering his condition ſupportable.

Experimental polity, inſtead of extending its views to a futurity too remote, and on that account uncertain, contemplates the living generation, and that which is immediately to ſucceed it. And ought not the ſuffering generation to engage its principal attention? The ſtateſman will, therefore, limit his views to the exiſting race, or that which is about to enter on the ſtage. Their wants require not thoſe chimerical ſpeculations which comprehend ages, but ſuch as regard the preſent moment.

A moment is almoſt all that is given man in which to be born, to look about him and to die. The preſent generation has a better right to repoſe and quiet than the future generation Its cries are directly heard, and its ſuccour ought to be prompt; for it is it that ſuffers, that groans, while the other ſtill ſleeps in the calm of non-exiſtence.

What

What a ſubverſion of reaſon would it be, were the ſtateſman to create the one in idea, to ſacrafice to it the other; if he were to dream of thoſe who live; if he were to attempt to make the preſent age pay for the felicity of ages to come; if under the pretext, for example, of the intereſts of Europe, he were now to wage a cruel war to prevent a future war, and had no other expedient for the approaching ſplendor of the empire, but the ruin of the citizens who have run half their race. Is it cuſtomary to till the land, to provide for years which the ſun does not yet illuminate? Is the vine pruned for the infant at the mother's breaſt? Does not each autumn, in its turn, bring ſtores and bounty in its train? Alas! by what fatality have ſtateſmen always talked of the misfortunes which might ariſe, and never of thoſe which already oppreſs us? Every time has its calamities, as every man has his load of ſorrows: if he is not permitted to caſt them entirely upon another, it is equally a falſe and monſtrous policy, to ſacrifice the actual felicity of our contemporaries to the enjoyments which are promiſed to our deſcendants.

I am far from denying the ſtateſman an active and generous forecaſt. While he cheriſhes the age in which he lives, he may prepare for the

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ſucceeding age that beneficial knowledge, which, by degrees, enriches all the orders of ſociety, and inclines them to diſpel error. I would only ſay that, under the pretext of lofty and magnificent projects, the ſtateſman ought not to ſlight the people that are under his eyes; that our country is not a mother who devours a part of her children to place the reſt in eaſier circumſtances: a deteſtable maxim; for to me it appears on the contrary, that the ſmaller the portion of happineſs we poſſeſs, with the greater anxiety ſhould the guardian protect, maintain, and preſerve it. The weakneſs of the individual claims the moſt powerful protection. This is the voice of humanity and juſtice, ſince the living laws ought ſpecially to be applied to the combatting of the evils which oppreſs us. It is thus that formerly good ſenſe, in critical conjunctures, in the moments of fermentation, dictated ſimple, noble, beneficent, and reaſonable laws to ſhepherds and mechanics, while we, with our profound and erroneous ſpeculations, open the door to calamities without number.

It appears to be demonſtrated, that, if the celibacy of prieſts were to be ſtill maintained, and if the inſtitution of monaſteries were to ſubſiſt for a century and a half more, the Proteſtant church would ſwallow up the Romiſh.

So that the clergy of France are the moſt intereſted in the great reduction of monks. But as theſe are rooted in the ſtate, and have contracted their peculiar mode of life in the ſight of the laws, and under the protection of theſe very laws, we may lament the evils which ſpring from ſuch a multitude of convents, and cloiſters, and monaſteries; yet, according to our own principles, we muſt not diſturb their preſent exiſtence for a future good. We may undermine their eſtabliſhments; but to deſtroy them in a ſudden and violent manner, is to take from them the inconteſtable privileges acquired under the eyes of the legiſlation. What body in the ſtate would be ſheltered from reform, if, inſtead of ſeparating the evils complained of, it were thought eaſier to overturn than to correct? Does not covetuouſneſs always blend itſelf, in ſome degree, with this exceſſive, this pretended love of the public good? Provide that ſo many perſons ſhall not ſubſiſt in celibacy another age, provide that they ſhall not die without poſterity. All this is well; but ſuffer thoſe who are to expire to-morrow, to breathe their laſt in the place which they have choſen through preference, under the ſanction of the laws, and by your own conſent.

The preſent generation ought, therefore, to

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be left unmolested to its enjoyments. Violent concussions are dangerous, and a state is not allowed to produce a present evil with a view to bring about a distant good.

CONTRACT.

IT is the national reason which, by insensible degrees, has formed the government, and conferred on it a respected sanction, since the rich and the poor equally find it advantageous. The poor man might still be stript of the little he possesses, and the rich might dread the invasion of the needy. And, as equality is demonstrably impossible, every citizen has a decided interest to support government. Circumstances may modify it; but to prove its origin, we have only to consult the perpetual desire in men for repose and liberty. It thence evidently follows, that the public good ought to be the fruit of government, without which it is precarious: government is, therefore, the act of a convention, of a mutual consent, and all the individuals are bound by the same contract.

Man has received from his Creator the power, likewise, of creating in the intellectual and moral world: Such are the sublime prerogatives of his

understanding and reason. Hence has sprung the general and reciprocal morality, the morality which is common and public, whether at home or among the societies which civilized men form successively on the earth. This is what philosophers term polity; a science which watches over the inestimable blessings of justice and of liberty it prepares, for those who now exist, and those who are as yet unborn.

Between the slave and the subject there is a wider interval; but the distance is still greater between the subject and the citizen. To examine accurately the spirit, the justice, and the genuine characteristics of national liberty, to fathom the resources of public œconomy, it is necessary to be a citizen. But to expect every thing from a single man, to behold one's country in the prince, to believe that the influence of the throne will avert public calamities, it then becomes necessary to be a subject.

Now, to those who are capable of perusing attentively the spirit of laws, there is only one leading idea, delicately interwoven. It is a sort of perpetual war against absolute power; and the three distinct forms of government, which continually recur in this theory, tend to shew that the monarchical government has no existence, or if it has, that it inevitably constitutes

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one of thoſe political defects which the nation is ſpeedily obliged to repair, leſt ruin enſue.

Monteſquieu expoſes perpetually that political phantom which perſuades itſelf that it governs. He ſhows that in every well regulated ſtate, it is public virtue that reigns, and that the invariable juſtice of government depends on the knowledge and courage of the citizens; that whereever ſubjects only are found, public virtue retires to a diſtance, or becomes merely an empty name. This writer ſhews that it is altogether impoſſible that public virtue can flouriſh among a people without energy, living ignorant of whatever is meet for them, of whatever belongs to them in the ſocial order. He demonſtrates that the nation muſt govern itſelf, or will be governed tyrannically. But he diſguiſes all the conſequences of this great principle, by eluding in every page the critical developement of it, by ſheltering his genius under quotations, or ſhunning the explanation, by prudent circumlocutions, as if afraid to promulgate this important truth, or loath to bring his book to a cloſe, by declaring it in a clear and firm manner.

But to the few men, whoſe minds are ſo matured and enlarged, as to advance before the conſequences of a firſt principle, it is unneceſſary to delineate them all.

Befide ignorance, individual, focial, and public reafonings are always loft; but thofe who have acquired this fecond education, more important than the firft, divine in the books of fages, all that they do not exprefs; they fee the lafhes of invective in the moft ftifled figh of modeft and cautious reflection. And without thefe men, who could have read the profound and nervous Montefquieu. If he was obfcure in many places, it was becaufe he chofe to be fo; becaufe he faw that minds would arife congenial to his own: And when with a moft fingular indulgence and addrefs he fubftituted honour for that public virtue, about which he had fpoken fo largely, this great writer knew well, that he was forming an ambiguous, an inexplicable word, and that to defcry the luminous and unfhaken beacon, it behoved the citizens to return to public virtue, as the only active and permanent fpring which muft mould all conftitutions, whatever their nature might be, to the collected will of the individuals.

Montefquieu, therefore, refers all his ideas to the notion of a political contract, and treats with ridicule and contempt every nation where this principle is forgotten. Under this point of view, a crowd of ftrokes which have a vague air, brighten and receive a colour.

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The nation which, preſerving conſtantly the ſame laws, ſhould not have reſerved to itſelf the right of reforming them, would have loſt its moſt valuable privilege. Deſpotic governments are oppreſſive, only becauſe they never change. It is, by a long courſe of encroachments, that the people are ſtript of the moſt eſſential of their natural rights. The form of government which remains too invariably the ſame, ſets the advantages of civil ſociety always at too high a price. The liberty of thinking ought to carry along with it the liberty of acting; and ſince opinions influence actions, we need not be ſurprized, ſtill leſs terrified, at many inevitable changes; for daily experience proves, that whatever lives is in perpetual action, and that degenerate men alone adhere conſtantly to the ſame manners. Speculative dogmas avail nothing. A man muſt learn to cruſh every reſtraint which would impede the developement of his ſublime faculties; his very exiſtence requires him to aſpire to extreme liberty. The inſtability natural to man and to all created things, ought to be an idea the moſt familiar to the legiſlator, and he ought to view, with ſatiſfaction, thoſe changes which follow the progreſs of human reaſon; for the greateſt political

error would be, to appear inflexible, when one muſt live with men and direct their minds.

What is the deſign of naval architecture ? To conſtruct better ſhips. What is the object of the ſcience of government ? To have a ſyſtem of religious, moral, and political principles ſo connected together, that the greateſt advantages may reſult to ſociety, and that theſe may be enjoyed in a ſtate of freedom.

The worſt of governments would be, that which ſhould join the evils of ariſtocracy to the dangers of arbitrary power. Wretched the people who ſhould groan under this double load! They would rather prefer, could their wiſh be accompliſhed, to fly into the arms of deſpotiſm, than conſent to be trampled on, ſometimes by the arrogance and rapacity of the grandees, ſometimes by the caprice and profuſion of the monarch.

THE MORE EXTENSIVE A STATE IS, THE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS TO IT IS A NEW CONSTITUTION.

IT is a maxim among phyſicians, "that no body is perfectly ſound." The ſame may be ſaid of every government: the leaſt imperfect

live in a middle exiſtence, in a ſtate truly *eucratic*, that is, where good and ill are intermingled, but where the good preponderates.

What is moſt difficult, is to give felicity to the whole of a people. The moſt reaſonable, and indeed the only concern, is to labour for their liberty, a ſure pledge of their happineſs. This is what we have done; and as public affairs proſper in no country but in proportion as knowledge is generally diffuſed among its inhabitants, we have exhibited, in awakening from our ſlumbers, the moſt glorious triumph that ever people gained over their ancient oppreſſors.

We have a vaſt territory well compacted, and a wiſe conſtitution, two eſſential points for the proſperity of an empire. If the happineſs of a people, and their power, be in proportion to the ſtate of the arts, and the progreſs of intelligence among them, we may aſpire to complete proſperity. The great extent of our kingdom will, beſides, accompliſh the phyſical means of its preſervation, by affording, abundantly, the various productions of nature and of art.

Our force will be then beyond all calculation, if it ſhould not be divided. And why ſhould it be divided, when liberty becomes the common intereſt; when the benefit of the revolution is felt in every part; when the eaſe of the people

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is prepared under the happieſt auſpices; when induſtry, free in every calling, opens a multitude of new reſources, and haſtens to ſhower its bounties on the numerous and important claſſes, invited to riches by that equality of rights which deſpotiſm had always carefully ſtifled? Can hope be better founded? Eighty-three departments are to pour into each other perpetual abundance, to provide againſt local dearths, and put an end to thoſe calamities, which, by the manœuvres of the moſt impudent monopoly, and the vices of a remiſs and criminal adminiſtration, ſevered, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, the ſtate into ſmall parcels, and deprived it of the advantage of its extent.

The progreſſion of our power, meaſured by the capacity of our underſtanding and the produce of our arts, exhibits proſpects equally flattering: and ſince it is men that, according to their worth, reduce into *acts*, and realize the force which a nation can draw from the extent of its poſſeſſions, our immenſe population muſt brave all the enemies who are jealous of our ſplendour. Yes, if it be the conſtitution of government that makes men what they are, ours having reſtored to every individual his genius, every Frenchman will, henceforth, diſplay his talents in all their excellence.

The force of laws depends on the number of thoſe who are governed by them, and ſtrengthens (who would ſuppoſe it) with the multitude, becauſe, when once received, theſe laws bind opinions more numerous, and ſubdue alike the legiſlators and the ſubjects. Laws reign like inviſible divinities, and acquire an influence the more certain, and the more irreſiſtible, as it is impoſſible to contradict the voice of a numerous nation.

The ſimpler a conſtitution is, the better does it ſuit a vaſt ſtate; for the character of bad laws is the prohibitive regimen, or that which oppoſes a great increaſe. Narrow minds perceive every where dangers, and invent ſhackles; they wiſh to give to others the little circles which accord with their weakneſs; they fear every latitude of conduct; they ſee nothing but a ſpring, a lever, a deſpotic authority. Occupied in limiting and concentrating objects, they think they claſs them, when they only diſunite them.

It is in a great ſtate that a ſimple conſtitution has a noble and ſublime play. Genius there takes its wideſt flight, becauſe it is not crampt by a ſtormy and contentious adminiſtration.— Little ſtates are like little men, who are commonly choleric, vain, and a compound of perſonal

defects. The ſciences and arts riſe not to perfection, neither are they multiplied in parcelled territories.

It would be vain to oppoſe the example of the Greeks. They were, indeed, divided into ſmall ſtates; but, in reality, theſe ſtates, in many reſpects, formed the ſame people, very numerous, and whoſe poſſeſſions extended from Sicily and Italy to the coaſts of Aſia. United under the Amphictions (thoſe deputies of the different ſtates, who, in the general aſſembly, repreſented the whole aggregated nation, and were entruſted with full power to decide concerning the joint intereſt) they were knit together by the ſame language, the ſame religion, the ſame love of liberty, and they had continual intercourſe with each other, which was the more eaſy, becauſe, almoſt all of them being ſituated on the ſea-coaſt, nature had beſtowed on them a territorial fraternity.

Still leſs ſhould we wonder at the progreſs of this celebrated nation in the arts and ſciences, as it could daily marry them together. Thus the unfolding of the underſtanding, and the improvement of the arts, depend on the frequent communication of a very large number of men with each other; it is the mutual aſſiſtance that men of different geniuſes afford, it is the con-

courſe

courſe of a multitude of ideas, that form the majeſtic ſpectacle of the human mind in all its dignity.

Men diſperſed have ſcarcely any idea. Hunting and fiſhing, by inſulating the human ſpecies, bring men back to the ſavage ſtate; and the remoter that ſmall towns are from a central point of communication, the more they are deſerted.

Our conſtitution, placed on a ſuperb ſoil, will certainly have a quickening virtue, which will hatch all the poſſibilities of nature, and, operating perpetually on what it has engendered, will multiply its productions one with another, till they become the ſource of a thouſand creations of different kinds. But this virtue diſplays its energy only under the ſtar of liberty, and in proportion as the *country* on which it acts is favoured by the extent, and the quality of the ſoil; for liberty is a ſpark which fires a large pile, or periſhes for want of fuel.

Viewed under this aſpect, France can neither be conquered nor maimed; no foreign power is able to make on it any dangerous impreſſion. Figure to yourſelf all that a great empire can diſplay, in point of force, treaſures, reſources, and the weight and obſtinacy of its reſiſtance. Now France, having the wiſdom to confine

itſelf

itſelf to its own territories, has nothing to fear from the fury, or the proſperity of its neighbours.

As every general idea, to be well-founded, muſt reſt on the natural courſe of things in entire liberty, it is only in ſtates of a great extent that the principles of political œconomy will meet with the feweſt obſtacles; becauſe neither the barrenneſs of the ſoil, nor external circumſtances, will then prevent good laws from having a free and full effect. To great empires belong general rules, ſince the underſtanding there examines only the grounds of things, without being obliged, by foreign connexions, to conſider particular caſes.

A great ſtate, repoſing on its own weight, is better calculated for baniſhing ancient abuſes, as the ocean caſts out upon its ſhores all extraneous bodies. It is then, that nature facilitates every effort, renders all labour beneficial, and favours true principles, while it beholds the productions expand, which induſtry draws from a large territory. In this vaſt reſervoir of individual faculties, the general intereſt promotes great achievements, becauſe it ſecures to each labourer, and in the moſt ſacred manner, the full enjoyment of the fruit of his ideas, and of his toil. The aſſurance that every one ſhall reap the

the profit of his exertions, is a capital condition, without which, all emulation would expire.

It is under the reign of liberty, that the arts engender each other. The intelligent and laborious huſbandman then reaps abundant harveſts of different kinds, and his barns overflow with agricultural treaſure; his ſtores, beſides plentifully maintaining himſelf and his family, afford a ſurplus for exchange.

Are you deſirous to increaſe the powers of the political machine? Encourage all exchanges; check no ſort of enterprize. No labour is unprofitable; all public works which require many hands, give birth to a multitude of uſeful conſumers. Rural operations are intimately connected with all the diſburſements of luxury; it is luxury that increaſes conſumption, becauſe it invites man to enjoyments which he cheriſhes, and no enjoyment is prepared without a multitude of labours and exchanges. The accumulation of capital requires time; the mind muſt be opened, the arts refined, and citizens of every claſs and temper put in motion. Let not the action of government interrupt the ſucceſſive expanſion of the human faculties; and let it know that it is a long, nay, a very long concatenation of effects, that produces a quantity of materials.

ON THE MEN WHO INSTRUCT.

IS it then impoſſible to reconcile power with liberty, that power neceſſary to impreſs on the laws a venerable majeſty, with that liberty neceſſary to the very exiſtence of ſociety?

This happy equilibrium will ariſe only from the intimate agreement between the part which governs, and the part which inſtructs; it is then that theſe men, forming a real body by their genius, their knowledge, and their courage, will obtain a gentle dominion over the public opinions.

The ſtateſman who ſhall perceive the force of this inviſible body, inſtead of contending with it, will make an application of it hardly ſuſpected in our times.

The part which governs ought to reſpect the part which inſtructs, that is, ſhould attend to whatever iſſues from its labours, examine them, follow them, and above all, not preſume to be better informed in theſe particulars than itſelf.

A ſtate cannot ſubſiſt without knowledge.— To become the concealed enemy of thoſe who ſearch after truth, to perſecute them, and to affect a contempt of them, is to proclaim a dread

of the public monitors; is tacitly to avow, that the operations of thoſe who govern, cannot bear the inſpection of reaſon; is to diſſolve the union which ought to ſubſiſt between thoſe who ſeek to do good to men.

The body which inſtructs has conſtantly benefited ſtateſmen; it has conſiderably abridged their labours. Nature, an attentive mother, always caſts ſome thinking beings amidſt the moſt ferocious multitude, and in the moſt barbarous regions. Theſe were the privileged beings, who taught the firſt arts, who ſketched out the plan of infant ſociety, who dictated thoſe laws which, though rude, were leſs fatal than thoſe modern and refined laws, which have laid the majority captive at the feet of the minority.

When thoſe who govern no longer reſpect talents, probity and genius, thoſe endowed with theſe excellences will, in their turn, ceaſe to pay attention to the rulers. They become no other than inſtruments of pride and violence; and the virtuous man, beholding in this diſcord, the bonds of ſociety nearly broken, rebuilds the moral code, and laſhes with contempt the legiſlator and the laws.

This is what Tacitus has done, in that fine

paſſage which I cannot forbear citing, where he avenges the memory of Ruſtinus and Senecio, who had written an eulogy on Traſeas and Flelvidius.

"The death of the authors, ſays Tacitus, was not deemed ſufficient; their books were burnt, as if man's thoughts periſhed with his body. Philoſophers were proſcribed, from a belief, that the love of virtue would be extinguiſhed with them. Deſpotiſm abuſed our extreme patience, and grievouſly ſcourged a nation that ſhowed a ſervitude equal to its paſt courage. An army of ſpies and informers ſurrounded us; it was as dangerous to hear as to ſpeak; and we ſhould have become inſenſible to our miſeries, if we could have obliterated the memory of events."

Such is the energetic picture which this great maſter has traced. We are placed in a happier age; but every thing may change in an inſtant; authority (and hiſtory at this makes us ſhudder) may degenerate into deſpotiſm. A thouſand cauſes, which corrupt kings to their own miſery, may, by deceiving them, involve ſtates in the deepeſt misfortune. I do not ſay that we are threatened with this diſaſter, but it ought conſtantly to be held up to view. The part

which

which governs has falſely imagined, that it alone was entitled to all the reſpect, and has endeavoured to ridicule the part which inſtructs.

It greatly injures itſelf; for the law ought to riſe from the boſom of the nation, that is, from the enlightened portion of the people, and receive ſanction under the canopy of the throne. Then, it is truly good, for it is the public voice.

This breath of genius has an inviſible action, eſpecially ſince the invention of printing. It has been called the philoſophical ſpirit; it will aſſiſt every man in power, who will receive it for his monitor; it will reign over his mind without enforcing ſubjection; it will inſpire him, as it has inſpired all the true friends of men, from Socrates down to Monteſquieu: It led the one to ſacrifice his life to the moſt venerable cauſe ever maintained; it made the other to ſupport the moſt obſtinate labours, and to penetrate a thorny and obſcure path, where no perſon in France had travelled before. Monteſquieu, endowed with the cleareſt and profoundeſt underſtanding that ever was diſplayed among us, has changed the ideas of his age, has diſſipated political prejudices, and the good which he will produce is undoubtedly only begun.

Why then this ſecret perſecution, which the pride of men in power has lately raiſed againſt

writers dear to the nation, and uſeful even to thoſe who affect to deſpiſe them? Why give the ſignal of a ſhameful and fatal war which will diſunite men, formed to liſten to each other, and to commun.cate their ideas and their views? If the true character of virtue, as a philoſopher ſaid, be not to caſt the ſmalleſt ridicule on whatever ſprings from virtue; why ſhould the man in power deny his eſteem to the profound labours which tend to remedy the miſeries of his country? Have not thoſe who govern, and thoſe who inſtruct, the ſame aim, and the ſame duties, and do they not come forward to be judged by poſterity?

As often as I have mentioned the part which governs, I have ſuppoſed it to be numerous, and it really is ſo; for it conſiſts of all the agents who concur to enforce the adoption of the general will.

In this view, the monarch, or the legiſlator, is often, notwithſtanding his preponderance, only the thouſandth part of the government of his ſtate; becauſe all that was inſtituted before him, all who ſurround him, all who ſpeak to him, all who inſtruct him, all who determine, more or leſs, his actions, form really the body of legiſlation or of royalty.

It is expedient to have a preciſe idea of all

thoſe

thoſe little ſcattered wills which long contend, and then unite and compoſe the will of the prince; to know *that* the law, which he ſigns, is not his own, but the expreſſion of the will of a certain number of men who have coaleſced after a multitude of diſputes. The law has always been compoſed, prepared, minuted, and written in different ſtiles before its promulgation.

It would be pedantry in a placeman to believe and imagine, that a perſon not in office is ignorant of its functions, as if the conducting of empires could now be a matter ſilent and ſecret; as if all the political manœuvres they can play off, could not be divined; as if the manners of a people were not public and ſtamped; as if the character of ſtateſmen was not known; and, finally, as if all thoſe events, which command general attention, could only be appreçiated by a few privileged mortals, who yeſterday enjoyed not this happy faculty, and who muſt have received, in a manner, the intuitive revelation by the hands of a courier.

There is another piece of pedantry, which is buſied about little expedients, that loſe themſelves in pitiful details. Montaigne obſerves, that during the greateſt calamities of his country, at a time, ſays he, when there were no laws, no juſtice, no magiſtrate who exerciſed

ercifed his office, a perfon took it into his head, to publifh fome wretched reform of doublets, breeches, head-dreffes, and city-banners.

It is the fame with thofe who liften only to their predilections or averfions, and, without comprehending the whole of a plan, run after pamphlets, and take alarm at the import of a few expreffions. They extract oppofite reafonings from the fame principles, they decide too much in conformity to themfelves, and according to their own partial views. Who does not feel the impropriety of a perfon in office giving a verdict? The minifter muft then pronounce like a man under the dominion of paffion, or like a man indifferent with regard to the iffue, difpofitions equally pernicious in a judge.

The fearch of truth is beneficial to a fovereign; for it is this that reftrains thofe violent concuffions which agitate the human mind.

And who can withftand the force of evidence? Is it granted to man not to open his eyes to the fun, not to behold the ftar of the univerfe overflowing every corner of the earth with a luminous torrent? Does truth depend on times, on places, on circumftances? Will it fpare man whofe life is tranfitory, that truth which by its nature is immortal? Raifed to the throne of the divinity, his reafon is the eye of the mind,

formed

formed to diſcover and to aſcertain immutable truths.

The friend of truth would believe that he ſhould betray the human race, if he did not plead its cauſe before the tribunal of miniſters. As it appears criminal to them, he reckons it his duty to juſtify it in their preſence.

Why ought reading and the preſs to be free? Becauſe the privilege of writing is derived from the liberty of thinking; and becauſe God having permitted the invention of printing, it is a magnificent gift of his providence; for the propagation of knowledge links to thoſe moveable and multplied characters, which it is not in the power of tyranny to annihilate or even to reſtrain.

Truth will never be pernicious, however oppoſite it may be to the opinion of the day. From the rational colliſion of opinions ſprings truth; and what man in this lower world, from the monarch to the meaneſt ſubject, can ſay, "I have no need of truth, I love not truth?"

OF INSTRUCTION IN POLITICAL SUBJECTS.

PUBLIC inſtruction is the guide of the ſtateſman: Muſt not he be ſtrangely, nay, ſtupidly prejudiced, if he fancies that he perceives all

the details, and therefore neglects inſtruction ſo neceſſary? And where ſhall he obtain it but in the relation of thoſe who have ſeen, reflected, and examined; and who, writing in the face of nations, have no other motive than the pleaſure of diſcovering and publiſhing truth?

He will draw inſtruction from hiſtory, it will be ſaid. But in theſe times another guide is wanted; it is hardly poſſible from hiſtory to acquire inſtruction relative to modern governments. The reaſon is this:——

The infinite number of paſt events will not correſpond, or at leaſt will very ſeldom, correſpond with the infinite diverſity of human actions. Theſe are always more multiplied than ancient examples. Examine all the empires, the kings, the miniſters, and the men, who have appeared in paſt ages, you will not find the occurrence of any one moment, which can be brought to cloſe exactly with any recent fact.—There will always be ſome circumſtances to occaſion an extreme diſparity; and, beſides, in events we ſhould be more intereſted by their moral, than by their phyſical nature. In a moral view, the ſame action may be totally changed. A king dies in a certain poſture of affairs, he loſes his life by acident, or by the iſſue of a conſpiracy;

ſpiracy; it is not ſo much the epoch that will determine the ſeries of facts, as the multitude of acceſſory circumſtances and events.

Paſt events are dead, and can ſcarcely ever ſpeak to the preſent generation. They may be compared to old family pictures, mute and inanimate, before which the children play a thouſand frolics, under the eye even of their venerable anceſtors. Beſides, it would ſeem that nature, in the infinite variety of characters ſhe exhibits, delights more eſpecially to diſplay her omnipotence by never repeating.

The affairs of this world are tranſacted by men; paſſion tranſports them, and the hiſtorian, afterwards, imagines that they were guided by policy alone. The hiſtorian is deceived: theſe titled men have obeyed little and vulgar paſſions; for an elevated rank confers neither prudence nor wiſdom.

The living generation requires, therefore, a regimen peculiar to itſelf: It cannot be guided by ancient and foreign maxims; the wants it manifeſts demand attention; its preſent utility, above all, ought to be conſulted, and as ſoon as its cries or claims are heard, the political management ſhould be inſtantly changed. It is a ſuſceptible body, and the accent of pain ſhould be heard in preference to every political maxim.

Nothing

Nothing is more abſurd, more cruel, more unjuſt, than to ſacrifice the preſent generation to the well-being of future generations, admitting the ſucceſs to be demonſtrable.

Irrefragable principles, in the government of ſtates, are extravagant and monſtrous; they ſhould vary according to the complaints of the ſuffering party. To adopt an unpliant theory, which reſembles the reſiſtleſs concluſions of geometry, is to confound the human race with inanimate objects.

There is ſomething ſtronger than the laws and the power of a prince, than the force of his armies; it is the habit people have, of adopting ideas which appear to them reaſonable. A new motive for reſpecting the impulſion made by the enlightened part of the community on the minds of men.

The people really perform half the work; they come voluntarily forward to cloſe the political knot, It is, therefore, the utmoſt imprudence to inſult the natural tendency of men to obey. They are exaſperated, and, from being gentle and docile animals, become furious, and will no longer be led.

Thus the action of government appears neceſſarily compoſed of two efforts nearly oppoſite. He who can only act will have few ideas,

and

and he who can only meditate, is hardly fit for action. It is requiſite, therefore, to liſten to reaſon, in order to learn how to ſurmount certain difficulties; and the hand of the workman ſhould, in its turn, inſtruct the head which combined the operation.

In this way we might terminate the old diſpute, between the part which governs, and that which inſtructs. A writer ſhould be permitted to publiſh his ideas in their full extent, provided the form in which they are conveyed, ſhould not degenerate into a libel, which is always mean and odious, and which takes from truth its ordinary aſcendency: and the governing body ought to have the liberty of chooſing or rejecting at will, among the multitude of theſe different ideas. But government ſhould never puniſh its admonitors for diſcourſes more or leſs meditated; for it is the laſt ſtage of tyranny, to be ignorant and jealous.

This pacification, I dare aver, would be advantageous to every place-man: the functions of writers, and of miniſters, would be completely ſeparated, and would thus concur more effectually, to promote the public good. This is the moment, or never, to eſtabliſh harmony between the two powers. Is it not the beſt in-

tereſt

tereſt of adminiſtrators, to avoid carefully, the appellation of timourous and daſtardly tyrants? and has not tyranny, which forbids the mind to ſoar, appeared, at all times, the moſt hideous, becauſe it fetters that liberty, which, concealed in a remote corner of our ſoul, informs us, that thought is, peculiarly, the precious attribute of our being, and that the loweſt debaſement conſiſts in its conſtraint and thraldom?

No appellation is more diſhonourable in Europe at preſent, than that of arbitrary dominion. Thoſe ſtates, where the preſs is ſhackled, are debaſed in the opinion of the people; their inhabitants are deemed ſlaves: they are heard to curſe their chains; for the body which teaches or writes, cannot be oppreſſed with impunity; the actions of theſe public men, come under the ſupreme tribunal, where all the deeds of thoſe who govern are judged.

It may be announced with an air of triumph and joy, that ſince this univerſal exploſion of thought, the blood of men is more ſpared than ever. Philoſophy (and it is this alone that has curbed the univerſe) philoſophy has reſtrained that high exerciſe of authority which cruſhed the human ſpecies; and humanity, more free, diſplays a countenance more worthy of its noble

origin;

origin; the violences which may be committed upon it will not, at this day, be paſſed over in ſilence.

The progreſs of ſociety, not between man and man, but between nation and nation, is ſtill in its rudeſt and moſt ſavage ſtate; this new ſort of civilization muſt be the work of luminous and ſublime books, which will be written on this important ſubject, the moſt magnificent that can be treated, and calculated to open new ſources of felicity and peace to the human race. But this civilization muſt firſt be dilineated in theory; and never was there one more novel, or more intereſting. This civilization of ſtates is not only practicable, but muſt be eaſier to accompliſh, than that which bridled the ferocity of individuals; for when an inclination to peace ſhall become the ruling principle of five or ſix great nations, the reſt of the world will enjoy repoſe.

Let it not be aſſerted that books produce no effect: experience proves the contrary; their influence is great. The pamphlet entitled *Common Senſe*, is confeſſed by all the Anglo-Americans, if not to have cauſed, at leaſt to have decided and haſtened, the famous declaration of the independence of America. The minds of the coloniſts were ſtill wavering and irreſolute, when

when this literary production fixed their views, and prompted that great event. It cannot be denied, but the ſimple and natural eloquence of this book, had a diſtinguiſhed and glorious influence on the policy, or rather on the fate of the Americans, by augmenting the number of their partizans; and the philoſophical author gave a general ſhock to the political world, which has given birth to a great empire, and a new order of things on the wide ſurface of the weſtern hemiſphere. Thus the voice of a ſingle man, who chooſes the proper ſeaſon, and treats public affairs with dignity, ſeizes the minds of his fellow-citizens, and determines the fortune of nations.

It is to be hoped and believed, that literature and the ſciences, ſpreading over the globe, will tend to unite the vaſt family of the human race, by extinguiſhing national prepoſſeſſions and animoſities, and by bringing into diſrepute thoſe old codes, the children of ignorance and barbarity. Benevolence will extend itſelf under the benign influence of theſe kind divinities, and men will no longer be divided by ſtupid prejudices, which retard all improvement. The ſciences will be the common benefactors of all nations, and the moſt diſtant people will participate in the lights of this philoſophy, which

is nothing elſe than inſtruction, or the culture of the mind, applied to the happineſs of men.

FALSE DENOMINATIONS.

AS in geometry, it is ſaid, there is a circle, a ſquare, a triangle, and an octagon; in like manner attempts have been made to ſubject all political ſtates to rigorous forms. No attention has been paid, either to the mixture of different powers, or to the balance of thoſe particular bodies which conſtitute the ſtate. As ſoon as a publiciſt had pronounced, that a certain ſtate was democratic, there was no appeal. According to this publiciſt, the ſtate was always free, while, excepting the day of an aſſembly, rather of a ceremonious, than of a political nature, it was moleſted by a multitude of little ariſtocrats, who had finally muzzled it on every ſide.

Denominations muſt, therefore, be laid aſide, to give place to a more rational inveſtigation.

It muſt not be ſaid, that England is a republic ;. for England bears not the ſmalleſt reſemblance to the Roman Republic, to the republic of Sparta, to the Venetian republic, to the republic of the Swiſs, or to that of Holland ; we ought to ſay it is a fine government, and the

leaſt

leaſt imperfect of all thoſe of modern times. Other governments muſt be qualified in like manner, by the names of weak, moderate, quiet, patient, oppreſſed, ſubjected, or aware of their ſlavery.

The Engliſh and the Swedes are free, under their kings: the Dutch are ſo, under their Stadtholder; and in Germany, the people have their privileges ſtill exiſting: the Germanic body is a vaſt federative republic, under a common chief, who is by no means a deſpot. Why, for nearly a thouſand years, has this body maintained its independence, and that of its members? Why are not the Germans ſunk to the condition of Ruſſian ſlaves? How happens it that the Germanic body ſees the flames of war lighted up between the ſovereigns of Germany, without apprehending that the conſtitution may ſuffer, or run any riſk of being impaired? It is, becauſe there are a multitude of laws, protected, defended, and explained, by a multitude of juriſconſults, whoſe aſcendancy is ſuperior to the force of arms; it is, becauſe there, political law is, and has long been, a conſtant ſtudy; it is, becauſe the laws act there in a ſurpriſing manner; it is, becauſe public juriſprudence, the idol of their univerſities, is there the moſt eſteemed, and the beſt inveſtigated ſcience,—a new

new proof, that the people themſelves make the laws. The Ruſſians, who have never choſen to apply to any ſtudy, have paid the forfeit of their voluntary ignorance.

We talk of a monarchical government; but in good truth, did the authority of government ever reſide in a ſingle man? It is ſaid, that he imitates the paternal authority; but is not this, as I have already obſerved, an abuſe of words? It is alſo ſaid, that he is a lively repreſentation of the empire of the divinity, who alone governs the univerſe, without ſharing his power with any other being. Kings themſelves, if they have but the ſhadow of common ſenſe, will perceive the exaggeration of this image, and will ſee how much the compariſon is defective. Others ſay, that it is better to have one maſter than many; but in a monarchy, people obey ſeveral maſters; for ſeveral command and ſpeak in the ſovereign's name, but they ſpeak when he is ſilent.

Let me be told of a centre of unity, in which all the powers of the ſtate are collected, and ſuch a government I ſhall comprehend: tbe only way, in which it can be proper for a political body to be governed, is by the action of a ſingle mind; but the national mind, and the

government of a ſingle man, are two things as widely different as poſſible.

When a monarchy becomes tyrannical, it is becauſe the people are fit to wear chains; it is becauſe they have deſerved to loſe their rights, by their loſs of energy, and by their diſdain of uſeful knowledge. Tyranny is not of long duration when the people preſerve their virtue; and the horror of oppreſſion will always produce one of thoſe revolutions, ſo well calculated to hinder thoſe who govern from making a bad uſe of their authority.

An ariſtocratical government reſides, it is ſaid, in a ſenate compoſed of members choſen and elected out of the claſs of nobles; but ariſtocracy bears hard on the whole of Europe; for Germany, France*, Poland, Ruſſia, and Denmark, are ſtill groaning beneath the weight of ſigniorial dues and feudal obligations, while the ariſtocracy of Berne is mild and prudent, and while the Swiſs peaſantry are protected by an ariſtocratical ſenate, which, elſewhere, bears ſo hard upon the common people.

A democratic, or popular government, takes its magiſtrates from its own body, by the way of election, reſerving to itſelf the right of caſhiering them, when it thinks meet, and of puniſhing

* This fragment was written before the revolution in France.

puniſhing them, when they make a bad uſe of their power; but where is this happy democracy to be found? Amid a few icy mountains in Switzerland, where abſolute poverty renders every citizen the equal of the reſt. But little was wanting to overthrow this democracy of Geneva; for, wherever there is an inequality of riches, democracy becomes the moſt imperfect of all governments. The common people, left to themſelves, grow into a monſter, with more heads than the hydra of the poet.

How many times has ariſtocracy been changed into democracy? And how many times has the latter, too imperious, and too inſolent, degenerated into an extravagant ſyſtem of tyranny?

I ſee every where, governments momentarily changing their form: the diſpoſition of the chiefs models ſtates, and impoſes on them the alternatives of liberty and oppreſſion. Among men, factions and parties change the mode of thinking upon the government, which is now exalted, and now debaſed. The part which governs is indifferent as to the name beſtowed on it, when it knows how to conciliate affections, and to anſwer with dignity for the depoſit entruſted to it; never will diſobedience characterize a wiſe government; and the ſovereign, great and generous, may reckon on the prompt

obedience of his ſubjects ; for where is the nation that eſteems not repoſe and happineſs ?

A *living* authority is indiſpenſible. It is the intereſt of every citizen, that it ſhall explain itſelf, ſhall act, and ſhall inflict vengeance on the violation of the laws. In every form of government an authority, ſuch as this, ought to take reaſon for its guide ; for the body which ſhall give utterance to public reaſon, will, in the event, predominate over all others.

When Plato ſaid, that republics would be happy, if philoſophers were kings, he meant to deſignate, by the word philoſophers, the enlightened part of the community, and, by one expreſſion, defined true government ; for if kings were to become philoſophers, the well-informed citizens would be governed by their own opinions, and it would be impoſſible that the greater portion of the citizens ſhould not become well informed.

The worſt princes are invariably thoſe who diſplay great littleneſſes in the midſt of magnificence, that is to ſay, they are thoſe who, not knowing how to entertain a proper reſpect for their own ſubjects, degrade the nation through one or more of its members, and conſequently deſtroy the reſpect due to the national chief. By elevating a ſtate, the monarch elevates himſelf;

ſelf; and far from dreading the knowledge which is univerſally and *thickly* diffuſed, he ought to know, that by this very knowledge he will reign peaceably and glorioully. Men are naturally propelled to obedience, when the government is gentle and moderate, and ſuch a government will be conſtantly ſtrengthened, whenever, the empire being wedded to public opinion, it ſhall, in concert with the latter, deſtroy the little tyrannies, in the annihilation of which the ſovereign and the people are equally intereſted. The part which commands will meet with no obſtacles, when it ſhall proceed conjunctively with the part which is governed.

Monarchical government undergoes ſeveral modifications. The Grand Seignor is a monarch, and the King of England is alſo a monarch; and theſe, notwithſtanding, are the two extremes: limited monarchy is very different from, not to ſay entirely oppoſite to, abſolute monarchy.

The government of a ſingle chief is almoſt always chimerical, and moſt frequently exiſts at a certain point of time only.

Ariſtocracy, which is the government of the great, flouriſhes, more or leſs, in all rich ſtates. Democracy, which is the government of the whole of the people, lurks in certain mountains among poor aſſemblages of men. But theſe go-

vernments, in approximating each other, aſſume an infinite diverſity of ſhades, and all of them are good, according to times, places, and men. Abſolute democracy is, as well as abſolute monarchy, a creation of the brain, ſince men, however little they may be enlightened, cannot ſuffer extremes.

In the midſt of the age of Louis XIV, which has been too much praiſed, did not theocracy, by which is implied the government of the prieſts, ſpring up in France? And did not theſe prieſts dictate all thoſe intolerable edicts, at which ages ſtill to come will ſhudder?

When the enemy, in a manner, knocks at the very doors of the ſtate, then appears timocracy, which implies the government of the ſoldiery. It is very viſible in ſeveral cities ſituated on our frontiers, and I have recognized its preſence in times of the profoundeſt peace: what then does this timocracy become, when war gives it its full ſcope?

Since the ſyſtem ſet up by the financier, law; ſince banking and jobbing have, more or leſs, perplexed the fortunes of all who are wealthy; ſince nothing has been done unleſs by money; and ſince the direction of its courſe is become a complex art, oligarchy (by which is meant the government of the rich) has ſpread over every part of

France.

France. Thoſe who poſſeſs wealth are reſpected; and for them, and by them, every thing is managed.

ERRORS IN THE DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTS.

THE diviſion of governments, denoted by the words monarchy, ariſtocracy, democracy, olygarchy, and republic, is erroneous, and has caſt men's minds into an ocean of contradictions.

All governments participate, more or leſs, of each other, and have their alternations of grandeur, of weakneſs, of courage, of proſperity, and of diſaſter: I ſee one people rule, I ſee another ſubmit to dominion. There is, neceſſarily, a conflict, between the different parts which compoſe a ſtate; but the balance is eaſily reſtored when the government is ſupportable.

Ignorance is ſtill more pernicious than ambition, and the general will appears to me as powerful in deſpotic, as in republican ſtates.

It is always the nation that governs; when it is weak and ignorant, it is wretchedly governed; when it is brave and enlightened, the ills diſappear.

Is it not univerſal perſuaſion, that is to ſay,

religion, that rules Turkey and Perfia ? Is it not refpect for the ancient laws that governs China? What the force of one man furnifhes towards the conducting of empires is trifling, in comparifon of that national and indelible character which conftitutes the government.

The moft abfolute fovereigns have been fenfible of this truth; they have experienced refiftance when they reckoned upon fuccefs; when they afterwards wondered at the height of their power, it was becaufe they had touched the fecret ftring which gives motion to the human will.

When the philofopher reads of the atrocities committed by Claudius, by Nero, by Tiberius, by Caligula, he exclaims, "If the empire permitted fuch monfters to hold fupreme fway, it deferved its miferies."

Let us confider, therefore, the fpirit inherent in a people, inftead of lofing ourfelves in the chimerical diftinctions which arife from the form of government; this fpirit, accurately obferved, folves every problem.

Every government is mixt. Thofe fixed and abfolute forms, under which the different kinds of governments have been diftinguifhed and claffed fyftematically, are really chimerical cafes. Thefe forms are infinitely varied and changeable;

changeable; the name remains, the thing alters. Never does a ſtate continue in the ſame point of force, wiſdom, and power, with regard to itſelf, or with regard to others; never is it governed half a century the ſame way, becauſe the governing body muſt perpetually ſubmit to the reigning manners and ideas, to the fluctuation in men's minds, and becauſe conſtitutions, the moſt corrupt, as well as the wiſeſt, are obliged to accommodate themſelves, however unwillingly, to the principles of thoſe at the head of affairs.

A deſpotic government becomes monarchical, or even republican, in certain circumſtances; and a republic has its unfortunate moments when deſpotiſm afflicts it.

The chiefs, that is, all thoſe who have a ſhare in the adminiſtration, impreſs a motion on a government totally different one day, from what it had the preceding.

Society, under whatever denomination it be conſidered, is at bottom only a collection of men who re-act perpetually on each other, and among whom the few conduct the many.

Among nations ſtill ſavage, men of diſtinguiſhed courage and intrepidity will take lead; among a civilized people, thoſe eminent for their acuteneſs, foreſight, ſagacity, and talents, will

will inſtill their ideas into others. All thoſe participate, therefore, in the ſovereignty, who contribute to eſtabliſh the ideas which afterwards ſerve as a baſis, whereon the legiſlator conſtructs his laws. The execution of them ſeems entruſted to a ſingle man, or to a few, but it depends, in fact, on the general conſent, which alone upholds them; and when one of theſe laws becomes ſuperfluous, or appears exceſſive, the legiſlator who formed it, dares not revive it, becauſe it is evidently proſcribed by the general will.

Thus the words monarchy, democracy, ariſtocracy, autocracy, republic, ought not to miſlead our reaſoning. A deſpotic government may be praiſed in a certain light, and in certain circumſtances; in like manner as a republic affords room for ſatire, and invective, when convulſed with internal diviſions.

Who does not perceive, at the firſt glance, that all governments have an intimate mixture of good and evil, which it is not always eaſy to diſcriminate and weigh when we enter into a cloſe examination of the details? Names change not the eternal nature of things.

Governments might be ſeparated into two claſſes, and the diviſion would be certainly clearer, and, perhaps, no leſs juſt. When a

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nation is ignorant, ſtupid, or indifferent about the knowledge of its true intereſts, evil predominates; the people are then puniſhed for their unſkilfulneſs, their indolence, their careleſſneſs, and their inſignificance. When the nation is enlightened, and vigilant with regard to its intereſts, it is never really enſlaved: nor can it be, ſince the part that governs, being perpetually watched, cannot act capriciouſly. The monarch, or his repreſentatives, muſt conciliate the eſteem of a people who then exiſts politically; it is impoſſible to treat them harſhly or haughtily, becauſe the nation entertains in its boſom a great number of men who reflect, who ſpeak, who write, who ſtudy the reſpective duties of the members of the ſtate, and who baniſh languor and apathy, the moſt dangerous of all political vices. Every meaſure is cleared up and publiſhed; none of the ſprings of government can be long hid in darkneſs: actions are judged from character, and character from actions.

The moſt violent deſpotiſm becomes then, in ſpite of itſelf, poliſhed and moderate; it reſts upon habits which take away its ferocity: It compounds itſelf, in a manner, with the part which it governs; it yields, it temporizes, it often retracts, and, at times, affords a liberty truly deſirable.

All governments experience theſe different oſcillations. Arbitrary power, broken down by an infinite number of little oppoſitions, diminiſhes, falls, and gives place to univerſal reaſon; and though it retains the ancient forms, they are no better than theatrical repreſentations. It is obliged to conform itſelf to the will of an enlightened people.

I reſpect it; every government is mixt. Monarchy has its republican bodies, and a republic its monarchs. From one end of the world to the other, whoever is entruſted with the execution of the laws, whoever is placed in an exalted ſtation by the chief or chiefs, enjoys neceſſarily a portion, more or leſs, of the ſovereignty; and whether he uſes or abuſes it, he holds in his hands a force, which, though limited and tranſient, is nevertheleſs real.

The governing part in a poliſhed ſociety is extremely extenſive, ſince it comprehends all the individuals who conſpire to move the political body. Have not the clergy, the lawyers, the financiers, in their turn, moments of almoſt abſolute authority? And has not the voice of the men of letters, in certain circumſtances, a marked preponderance, ſince it blaſts wherever is chuſes to ſtrike? Finally, what does a multitude of privileges, rights, and prerogatives imply but par-

tial repreſentations of authority? It is never ſingle among an enlightened people; it is divided, and the more ſo, in proportion, as the ſtate has advanced towards civilization.

We may judge, therefore, of the frivolouſneſs of the diſputes, with regard to the form of different governments. Rejecting names, you will perceive every where men aſſembled, divided into different tribes, and endeavouring to eſtabliſh among themſelves an equilibrium: it fails, it is reſtored, it wavers; at certain times it is, in a manner, perfect, at others, it is in part cruſhed. Then its groans are heard, and the injured part calls loudly againſt the oppreſſion, which ceaſes or gains ſtrength.

The ſprings which combine ſo many contrary motions into one, almoſt reſembling order, are not concealed under the throne of the monarch, but really emanate from many individuals, who, in their different ſtations of preeminence, hold the great political body in repoſe, or give it the neceſſary impulſe.

The adminiſtrators of ſtates are ſcattered every where; they foſter and direct the inciting ideas. Often in an obſcure cottage, an unſeen hand prepares the will of the ſovereign; for that of kings is uſually adopted from their ſubjects.— The royal edict has been compoſed long before the

the public herald proclaims it in the ſtreets: every one has contributed to it, his idea, his wiſh, nay, his expreſſion; and when announced, it is obeyed and reſpected, only as it is ſanctioned beforehand by the public opinion.

The ſpeculations of monitors, whether in diſcourſe or in writing, are what have inſtructed and prepared men's minds. If the public opinion formally oppoſes an edict, it is ſoon forgotten, and allowed to join the uſeleſs maſs of papers ſigned by the monarch, and annulled by the nation.

When a nation is vicious, its laws are abſurd and tyrannical; when the people are politically virtuous, that is, determined to raiſe their voice and command reſpect, they are always free. But when they forget their privileges and rights, they are oppreſſed, or, in other words, puniſhed for their neglect.

A large number of good citizens, attentive in watching over the public operations, forms, therefore, a wiſe and mild adminiſtration: but if theſe citizens ſlumber in fatal ſecurity; if they forbear to be patriots, and to entertain an ardour for liberty; if they ceaſe to lament the ſtrokes of deſpotiſm; if they flatter it, careſs it, and even juſtify it, with a view of favouring ſome one whom they idoliſe, from their

very cowardice itſelf will tyranny take root and grow. It is ſtill more the fruit of national weakneſs, than of the audacity of the deſpot.

Real ſlavery can never exiſt among a thinking people; if they are oppreſſed, they muſt be deſtitute of ideas: ideas are the true rampart againſt tyranny, which is ſo contrary to reaſon. There remains in the heart of man an aſylum for liberty, from whence it will ſpring nobler and ſtatelier.

Public manners are the mirror which reflects the true conſtitution of a ſtate. Is a ſtate ſubject to diſgraceful, antiquated, unreaſonable prejudices; is it deſtitute of knowledge, which it rejects to graſp at ſuperſtition? whatever may be its ſplendour, its extent, its janiſſaries, pronounce that it is weak and near its ruin, if it be not ſpeedily regenerated. A ſtate diſgraced is a ſtate half ſubdued: but if it maintains principles founded on pure notions, if it knows the arts and reſpects them, be aſſured that authority, how formidable ſoever may be the pomp with which it is ſurrounded, can only produce good, or diminiſh the ſum of paſt evils.

Let us ſtop then to examine the aſpect of a people; let us weigh their knowledge: this is the root which will attach them to the ſoil, which will beſtow on them the force to reſiſt ſtorms.

ſtorms. They cannot be ſhaken while the genius of the arts ſhall quicken the induſtry of each individual. It is the expanſion of the moral forces that will give a firm ſupport to the empire.—Let us baniſh thoſe vague words which engender ſo many ſophiſms, and equally juſtify both ſides of the argument. Experimental polity rejects theſe imperfect theories, where contradictions ariſe at every ſtep. Let us ſhut our books, and enquire whether a nation is enlightened or ſtupid.

Liberty muſt neceſſarily be the companion of inſtruction: if this be diffuſed through ſeveral claſſes of citizens, they muſt infallibly enjoy the correſponding degree of liberty. The body is never reduced to ſervitude, where the mind was not previouſly enſlaved. If the people place a curtain between themſelves and the operations of government; if they conſent to take off their eyes from the conduct of their chiefs; if they expect every thing from them, themſelves wrapt in profound ignorance or indifference; will the names of democracy, republic, and ariſtocracy ſave them from ſlavery? And what matters it, though the monarch bear the title of deſpot, reigning by the divine commiſſion, if the people manifeſt a reſiſtance to whatever cramps their natural ſituation, if they compel their ſovereign

to reſpect their temper, if they ſtop his career with pamphlets and epigrams.

Nothing can debaſe the ſentiments of a generous nation, when it accumulates many ideas on government; when this important ſubject warms and intereſts it; when it catches whatever relates to the branches of adminiſtration. Moral knowledge is the permanent foundation of all finiſhed ſociety. Vulgar polity, which acts by deceiving, which covers itſelf with artifices, is calculated only for the fleeting moment; it may extricate itſelf from a falſe ſtep, but will fall into the ſame predicament ſome time after. True polity includes the ſum of human knowledge; and laſtly, the force of a people elevates then, enobles them in their own eyes, beſtows on them a proud regard for their own generation, and by this expedient, comprehends the felicity of generations yet unborn.

If the ſovereign eſteems the nation, the nation will eſteem him, and this union will create on each ſide a more than ordinary force. The abilities of a people may be increaſed, like thoſe of an individual, by applauding them, and expecting much from their genius. We may induce men to perform any thing, if we do not mortify them; the way to aggrandize them, is to reſpect them; the way to render them peace-

able ſubjects, is not to ſeem to dread their force, and not to thwart their talents. That a nation be great, it is requiſite that it contain many great men. Exalt it in the individuals who compoſe it, if you would create prodigies? Tremble to oppreſs the ſmalleſt induſtry; it will be a loſs to the ſtate.

POLITICAL VARIETIES.

POLICY, which at the firſt glance may appear to be founded on reflection, has, like every other operation of the human mind, its caprices and its abſurdities. Principles, the offspring of chance, of the moment, and of opinion, are brought forward without a rational forethought. Here a woman commands a ſavage nation, where the women are deſpiſed: there they are excluded from the throne, in the country where they have the greateſt aſcendancy, and where ranks and laws, where, in ſhort, every thing is ſubjected to arbitrary rules, that have cuſtom only for their title, and for their excuſe antiquity alone.

Some laws are derived from climate, the influence of which, however, Monteſquieu has puſhed too far.

What

What may with greater juftice be advanced, is that the extremes of heat and cold appear to extinguifh the imagination, and to confine it to fuch primitive difcoveries as are the offspring of neceffity.

Here the *fpiculæ* of ice, thofe fharp particles, imperceptible to the fight, with which the air is filled, convert man into a paffive being: he cannot call forth his induftry, obliged, as he is, to live in a clofe fmoky hut, and to fhun the air, which, like a fharp-edged weapon, fevers his toe or his finger as foon as he ventures abroad. There the heat enervates the body, and induces to indolence, the fun exhaling through the pores of the fkin what ought to feed the vigour of man, and leaving him the ftrength alone to exift.

In certain countries the arts continue in their infant ftate, and cannot be advanced towards perfection, becaufe neceffity can take but a limited flight; and wherever the climate is in one of the extreme ftates, it influences the character. As foon, however, as it lofes this *energy*, the influence ceafes. Where the exceptions are frequent, thefe reafonings are reduced to ingenious conjectures: the genius, the manners, and the character then belong to the legiflation, and the fearcher after nature, who can have no-

thing further to ſay, ought to yield to the moraliſt.

The Arabs have beſtowed a certain ſhare of authority on their chief, merely becauſe they are always engaged in war. That this authority, which is pretty extenſive, ſhould ſubſiſt in an independant nation, fond of its liberty, contemning riches, and inured to fatigues, muſt, at firſt ſight, reaſonably excite ſurpriſe. But this nation was ſenſible that it needed a chief, who ſhould be a point of union to the national wills, and who ſhould be the firſt to act, and to undertake all warlike enterpriſes. As the Arabs are divided into tribes, the nation, without an abſolute chief, could not have compoſed a collective body. Thus in countries where men are haughty, free, poor, and ſuperior to luxury and effeminacy, has nature ſet up a kind of deſpot, whoſe authority may be ſaid to equal that of a ſultan; and this deſpotiſm is as different in its effects, as it is in its cauſes.

The moſt ſimple laws are calculated for men who have few wants, and who are thinly ſcattered over the ſurface of a territory deſtitute of practicable highways. But when men preſs in crouds to the ſame point; when they enter cities, as flocks enter into the fold, in compacted bands, then do laws become temporaneous and

changeable.

changeable. To him in whofe hands the public force was depofited, it was, therefore, eafy to impofe reftraints on thefe numerous bodies of men who, being fwayed by feparate interefts, refemble thofe infects that reciprocally devour each other.

A fact which cannot be queftioned is, that empires have been founded by induftry, and the practice of virtues: we obferve in the fequel, that the forefights, the inquietudes, the alarms, the prejudices, and the chimeras of placemen are not capable of fuftaining thefe very empires. The reafon is, that the multiplicity of laws, haftily enacted, become burthenfome; and, as a futher reafon, laws can alone poffefs vigour, when they at once embrace cuftoms and manners. The fource of the earlieft laws arifes from the abyffes of nature, as rivers flow from the fathomlefs cavities of mountains. Ariftotle defcribes man as a political animal, for this reafon, that he is fo of himfelf, and without any extraneous affiftance, fince he lives in fociety, and has at his command the reproduction of the gifts of nature, and fince he extends the perfectibility of human nature, and is confequently fufceptible of all the focial virtues.

It was the nation itfelf, before ftatefman were known, that adopted the plan of fociety, and

converted it into an almoſt univerſal law. Long prior to political inſtitutions, man of himſelf underſtood what was needful for his government and defence; and ſociety was then, if I may be permitted to ſpeak figuratively, a ſquared block of an equal dimenſion. Policy has changed it into a ſharp pointed pyramid, the baſe of which has become ſo diſproportionately extenſive, as to have cruſhed a great number of individuals.

Governments, or, to ſpeak more correctly, laws, have been contrived by men merely in defence of their liberty, becauſe it is in the very nature of things, that deſpots ſhould ſpring up. Every power exerciſing and extending its action until its progreſs is arreſted, it follows, that abſolute authority is in its origin unqueſtionably derived from the natural ſuperiority of a man, who, in the ſequel, abuſes the power delegated to him, either by himſelf, or through his repreſentatives.

Nations have loſt the recollection of the forms of government they had themſelves inſtituted, and which they ſtill preſerve merely by inſtinct. To genius, courage, and talents, they have invariably paid the momentary tribute of their obedience. The former of theſe exerciſes a legitimate and predominant ſway over the minds

of

of all; while courage, which, by its resistance, is able to contend, and does effectually contend against the encroachments of power, is also the resource of the political body. Every nation must be sensible, that good can arise out of the law of equilibrium alone. Nothing but the dread of groaning under a yoke more insupportable than that the shackles of which they are desirous to burst asunder, can render nations patient and submissive; and their forbearance and tolerance of injury do not always arise from cowardice, but from prudence: the scale of mischiefs which despotism, that is to say, the abuse of force, constantly at the command of a tyrant, may produce in a moment of rage and licentious madness, has, in our days, been appreciated. The despot might fall, it is true, but in his fall he might do a vast deal of mischief, a fact which the people divine instinctively: when it does not oppress them with too great a weight, they respect even despotism itself.

It would be a curious undertaking to compare together ancient and modern legislations; ancient nations were governed by themselves; the modern ones are governed by monarchs.

To be fitted for a legislator, it is necessary to be acquainted with the inherent disposition of

man, and to obſerve all the impreſſions he receives from nature and ſociety.

A ſimple and rude nation, in approaching towards perfection, will perceive of itſelf that the uſages to which it has heretofore conſented are not ſufficient for its wants.

How can the happineſs of a nation be ſecured by laws? Place a man of genius among a ſavage tribe, and he will find it impoſſible to modify, in a ſudden manner, ſuch an aſſemblage of individuals: it will be incumbent on him, as he will find, to ſpare the prevailing uſages, ſince, in the progreſs of human intelligences, there can be no ſudden and violent ſtart. Where there ſhall be a want of reſiſtance, it will be impoſſible for him to command. How can he give to this tribe an impulſion which ſhall draw it towards the aim he has in view? How is he to haſten the degree of civilization, provided it does not accord with the diſpoſition of the people?

However rare and aſtoniſhing the power of legiſlation may be, it cannot create the firſt germe, which it can alone develope: to the end that they may make a rapid progreſs in the ſocial virtues, the people muſt voluntarily adopt laws. We have read of the exiſtence of ſavage laws among the uſages of a civilized nation, be-

caufe the latter has made a rapid progrefs onwards; but we have never heard of wife and humane laws among favages.

Never will chance come at the profound combinations of a good fyftem of laws. The *chef-d'œuvre* of legiflation has a particular fcope among a new people with whom there is nothing to deftroy. If the new ideas are not refifted by any particular prejudices, they will be received.

But focieties of long ftanding will make a greater refiftance to the views of the philofopher; and it ought to be obferved here, that legiflators who have been bred in a polifhed nation, can never feize the paffions of a barbarous race. Never did an incorporated nation admit of an abfolute inftitutor from without, on this account, that it is impoffible for ftrangers to bring about the revolution they may meditate, the obedience of fubjects taking its folidity from habit.

There is a certain progreffion of ideas from which nature never deviates; and it has never occurred that any nation has received all thefe ideas at once: fucceffive developments are required; and a gradual progreffion muft be obferved, before reafon, univerfally diffufed, can in a manner convert in fentiment a whole na-

tion

tion into one individual. In consulting history, I observe several legislations, borrowed from its neighbours, to reside in the same nation. But with respect to the Chinese, a race of men who, keeping altogether to themselves, have shunned all communication with the universe, their legislation is a long and uninterrupted succession of the same spirit and the same character.

One sovereign alone cannot therefore rescue from barbarism a whole nation; and when the flambeau of the arts shall once be lighted up, he cannot plunge it again into its primeval state.

The Czar Peter would have effected nothing had it not been for the illustrious reigns of two females, who, thirsting after glory, succeeded him in the supreme authority, and combined with the energy of his character a greater degree of mildness and humanity. In Russia, however, the ferment of the arts has been able to act on that alone by which the throne is surrounded, the bulk of the nation not being yet prepared to throw off its natural rudeness of character.

The legislators of ancient republics, who, by way of distinction, particularly bestowed the title of the virtues on a love of poverty and a contempt for riches, would be not a little surprised, at this time, to see nations gaining an

aſcendancy by commerce alone, and making the acquiſition of riches their principal aim: to ſee money converted into the price and equivalent of all ſervices, nay, of every virtue, keeping in its pay bravery and patriotiſm themſelves. Thoſe who govern, and thoſe who are governed, have alike no other incentive; and man, as an individual, eſteems himſelf happy in proportion to his riches only, which are, at the ſame time, conſidered by ſtates as the meaſure of their ſtrength and the pledge of their ſecurity.

This is a perfectly novel policy. If the ancient legiſlators had been told, that the aim of every political ſociety ſhould be the acquirement of riches, could they, without ſurpriſe and indignation, have framed an anſwer? Would they not have ſaid, that by ſuch a ſyſtem men muſt infallibly be hurried into exceſſive avarice and extreme luxury; and that the fatal conſequences of theſe exceſſes would and muſt be felt, to their certain deſtruction, by the nations themſelves?

A book, ſuch as that produced by M. Necker, would certainly have ſurpriſed Lycurgus. He would have been able to form no clear idea of an adminiſtration founded on calculations more or leſs uſurious, and the whole ſtreſs of which was laid on money bags. He would every

where

where have ſought for that principle of perfect equality, the very ſhadow of which he would have ſearched after in vain. He would have heard of nothing but the exchange of the riches of every quarter of the globe, and of blood ſhed on the ſeas in the name of commerce. He would have conſidered this book as the boundary of the corruption of nations deeply degraded, and ready to become the prey and the vaſſals of the neighbouring nations.

And we, notwithſtanding, live in the midſt of this corruption, and every thing goes on with activity and ſucceſs. Money is the common token of all commodities, and the medium of all exchanges: through the commerce of money a nation may be deprived of all her natural productions, which may be removed from the eye that ſaw them grow, and from the mouth of the cultivator left to periſh with hunger. The taxes are not paid in kind;—he who dreſſes the vine muſt ſqueeze gold out of the grapes of his vintage. O Lycurgus! when thy legiſlating brain reflected on all the modifications of the human ſpecies, didſt thou ever obtain a glimpſe of ſuch a diſcordance in political harmony! It exiſts, and to us is not even a matter of wonder.

OF

OF NATIONAL COURAGE.

THIS is the virtue to which every thing yields obedience; it is the ſureſt rampart of ſtates, the moſt infallible pledge of public liberty. Inſtead of expatiating on this ſubject, it will be better to quote an illuſtrious example from the Roman Hiſtory: no circumſtance, perhaps, places the intrepid genius of that people in a ſtronger light than the firſt punic war.

It was leſs a conteſt of ſtrength (ſays Polybius in deſcribing theſe two nations Rome and Carthage,) than of animoſity: if the Carthaginians gained not the victory, they believed themſelves vanquiſhed; if the Romans were beaten, they ſtill made the Carthaginians tremble. Rome wiſhed to drive them out of Sicily, becauſe that province was too near Italy not to raiſe apprehenſions in the ſenate leſt their ſettlements ſhould gain ſuch a footing there as might one day prove formidable. The Romans projected, therefore, the conqueſt of Sicily, and they effected it; but ſcarcely were they maſters of that iſland, when they perceived that, after much expence of time and blood, they had not yet obtained their object. Carthaginian fleets

lined

lined all the coafts of Sicily, and hemmed the Romans in their conquefts themfelves.

There was only one expedient for Rome in this critical pofture of affairs ; it was to eftablifh a power at fea to preferve what it had acquired on land. But the republic had then neither mariners, nor pilots ; neither fhip-builders, nor arfenels ; they were without any knowledge of the coafts, of the winds, and of the feas : and even could veffels have been purchafed in the adjacent countries, Carthage, more opulent than Rome, would have agreed to fo high a price, as to deprive the latter of this refource.

Chance, that unknown fpring of the greateft events, came to the affiftance of the Romans. A Carthaginian galley, driven thither by a ftorm, was wrecked on the coafts of Italy; this fuggefted to the Romans the idea of forming a naval force. Every thing was wanting for the execution of this defign ; but their penetrating genius, and their inflexible refolution, triumphed. Patience and labour fupplied each want. They drew the galley to the beach, and examining it attentively, through the quicknefs of their genius, obtained a knowledge of its mechanifm. At firft, the unfkilfulnefs of their workmen formed a very clumfy imitation of the model ; but fuch was their promptnefs,

activity, and zeal, that, in the ſpace of two months, the republic had a fleet of an hundred and twenty galleys, a prodigy unparalleled in hiſtory.

It may well be ſuppoſed that theſe firſt maſters in the ſcience of government were unexperienced, and could form but very indifferent ſcholars. Yet the conſuls embarked in this fleet with as much confidence as if it had been Carthaginian. They found the ſecret of inſpiring the troops and the crews with their courage, or rather temerity.—And this was no difficult matter with the Romans.

One of the conſuls, ſetting out on a ſecret expedition, was met by a Carthaginian general, who, not daring to fight or attack, deceived him by a mean artifice, and ſurpriſed him with ſeventeen galleys. Perhaps this check was neceſſary to rouſe all the Roman valour by the moſt lively and juſt reſentment. The Carthaginian general needed not his victory to treat with a ſort of diſdain a people that had newly ventured on the ſea; but he forgot what courage can effect. Shortly thereafter he deſcried the Roman fleet in a very narrow bay; he advanced boldly to view them, and the Romans came out with equal reſolution to fight. They did engage him, and, what is moſt ſurpriſing,

prising, dispersed his fleet, and sunk a number of his vessels. The name of the victorious consul, who so successively avenged his colleague, was Dullius. As Rome had no navy before, this was evidently his first campaign. It therefore became necessary for him to study an art with which he was unacquainted. He was filled with apprehensions in reflecting upon the inferiority of his fleet. The fear of the dangers to which this disadvantage exposed him, sharpened his genius, and led him to seek the method of rendering the contests equal. He invented a sort of grapple which secured the vessel attacked without the possibility of its being disentangled; and by this happy contrivance, naval actions became contests between man and man on a firm footing. On the strength of this resource, he conceived the hope of victory; he advanced towards the Carthaginian fleet, came up with it, and made the attack.

At his approach the Carthaginians remarked something uncommon on board his galleys; it was the machine intended to throw the grapple and accelerate the boarding of the enemy. As it was new to them, they could not imagine what it might be. Their superiority of force dispelled their surmises, and they advanced, determined, at all events, (says Polybius) to engage.

gage. Their fleet conſiſted of an hundred and thirty ſail, and was manned by a people of conſummate ſkill in naval affairs. That of the Romans amounted only to one hundred and three, their crews unaccuſtomed to the ſea, and without nautical experience. The boarding decided the combat; and victory was complete on the ſide of the Romans. The Carthaginians loſt fifty galleys, taken or ſunk, the ſuperb galley even which had conveyed Pyrrhus from Greece to Italy. The Romans killed 3,000 men, and took 6,000 priſoners. The commander of the Carthaginian fleet owed his life to an artifice which ſaved him from the puniſhment of the croſs, the uſual fate of the unſkilful or unproſperous Carthaginian generals.

In the mean time Dullius gave to aſtoniſhed Rome the ſpectacle of its firſt naval triumph. What intoxication of joy! The ſenate judged the event ſo extraordinary and ſo important, that they tranſmitted the memory of it to poſterity, by a column, facing the ſouth, which was erected on this occaſion: it exiſts at this day. It is conſtructed of very beautiful white marble, and bears an inſcription deſcribing at length the combat of Dullius; as if time had delighted to reſpect a monument which inſtructs the governors of nations in the art of

rewarding great talents, and of inſpiring a reſpect for them.

The triumph of Dullius was complete; but in proportion as it was ſignal, it became a ſurer pledge of the vengeance which the Carthaginians would ſeek to inflict. The fight of Ecnome, ſo well deſcribed by Polybius, preſented an occaſion. Details do not enter into our plan; we wiſh only to mark the ſpirit or a celebrated nation, and the great example or courage which it has exhibited to the whole world. It will ſuffice, to give an idea of the two fleets, and of the two armies embarked in them.

The Carthaginian fleet conſiſted of more than 340 ſail, their army of about 150,000 men; that of the Romans was inferior in every reſpect, though not conſiderably ſo. The two conſuls, Marius and Regulus, commmanded the Romans; Hamilcar and Hanno, the Carthaginians. The action was as hot as can be imagined; on the one ſide, they were contending to wipe off the diſgrace of a defeat, and to ſecure the empire of the ſea; on the other, to preſerve the glory of a victory, and to acquire the ſame empire. The Romans, ſtill novices in naval affairs, diſplayed their wonted courage. It prevailed over the experience, the preſumption,

tion, and the cunning of the Carthaginians. The latter loſt the day, and near one hundred of their veſſels, of which thirty were ſunk. The Romans had not a ſingle one taken, and loſt only twenty-four. The object of this expedition was a deſcent upon Africa, to remove the war from Italy. The conſuls acted ſucceſsfully, and attacked the very environs of Carthage.

But on what depends the deſtiny of the greateſt ſtates? The weight of a ſingle man can turn the ſcales, and raiſe or depreſs a nation. Xantippe, the beſt ſkilled in Greece, both in the ſea and land ſervice, changed totally the face of affairs. Carthage invited his aſſiſtance, and entruſted him with the command of her fleets. Xantippe beat the Romans in all quarters, and took Regulus, whom he led in triumph to Carthage.

The capture of the conſul, the ruin of the Roman marine, and the flouriſhing condition of the Carthaginian, perſuaded that ungrateful republic that it had no more occaſion for a ſtranger, who enjoyed the higheſt reſpect within its walls: it reſolved to diſmiſs him, and to ſend him back to Greece. To what lengths will not the meanneſs and animoſity of jealouſy proceed? The Carthaginian generals thought

the glory, which this Greek had obtained for himſelf, was ſo much wreſted from them. Xantippe, informed of the diſpoſitions of Carthage, with regard to him, preſſed his departure. He was ſent away covered with a ſort of ignominy; and to crown all with perfidious atrocity, ſcarcely had the veſſel, on board of which he embarked, proceeded a few leagues from the ſhore, than he was caſt into the ſea, with the conſent, and even by the order of the nation which he had juſt ſaved. The Carthaginians choſe rather to incur the odium of a deteſtable crime, than to expoſe themſelves to the dread of this general, either reſiding among them, or with their enemies. The Grecian commander had taught the Romans, that to vanquiſh them required only an experienced man who could foil their courage by addreſs. The ſea, which they preſumed to ſubdue, ſoon informed them, by the loſs of three hundred ſail, that bravery is unavailing againſt tempeſts, as it alſo is againſt dexterity of conduct.

All theſe diſaſters in rapid ſucceſſion befel the Roman republic; but, amidſt her multiplied misfortunes, ſhe was ſtill inflexibly determined to be miſtreſs of the ſea or to periſh. All her loſſes were in a ſhort time repaired, and Rome (a fact incredible were it not atteſted by Polybius)

bius) combated with equal obſtinacy proſperous Carthage, the ſea, and the ignorance of her pilots. But all theſe efforts became ineffectual; the Romans loſt, by a tempeſt which they raſhly braved, and which the Carthaginians avoided, the two fleets they yet poſſeſſed, the only ſad remnant of their navy.

If the ſenate ſeemed then to abandon the empire of the ſea, and to be ſatisfied with permitting individuals to fit out armed ſhips, it was not through weakneſs or diſcouragement on their part; but timber, men, treaſures, every thing was exhauſted.

This apparent ſlumber of Roman firmneſs laſted only during its total imbecillity. It required only five years, however, for Rome to cure theſe deep wounds. An unanimous ardor for the public good prevailed ſo powerfully and ſplendidly in that republic, that its marine was recruited as if by magic; an admirable inſtance of the immenſe ability of an united people. The riches of the treaſury, the credit of individuals, induſtry, labour, genius, and conſtancy, were all exerted to put out to ſea a fleet of two hundred ſail. The experience which the Romans had lately acquired in naval affairs, enabled them, with theſe new forces, to diſpute once

more the empire of the ſea with Carthage, under the command of Lutacius.

This conſul engaged the Carthaginians, leſs exhauſted, but rather diſheartened than fatigued, with a conſtancy which nothing could tire out: he obtained over them a complete naval victory, and joined to the advantages obtained by land thoſe of the ſea. Thus did Rome, under theſe circumſtances, well merit the reparation ſhe made of all her misfortunes.

Carthage, humbled and diſcouraged, had not force to emerge from her calamities; ſhe made a burthenſome and diſgraceful peace, by a timid acceptance of all the conditions which the Roman conſul was pleaſed to preſcribe. The Roman people propoſed additional articles, which the cowardice of the vanquiſhed accepted likewiſe.

Such is the delineation of the firſt punic war. It was begun when the Romans, who brought it to ſo glorious a concluſion by the ſuperiority of their naval force, had not a ſingle galley, nor a ſingle mariner. If they acquired in ſo little time unexpected ſucceſs, it was the fruit of virtues, the daughters of the public ſpirit which reigned within their republic. Never did more aſtoniſhing reſources in ſudden or unforſeen emergencies appear with greater luſtre than in

this war; nor can we read this portion of hiſtory without feeling equal ſurpriſe and admiration. Thus public ſpirit begets patriotiſm, and patriotiſm inſtructs a whole nation, that it is better to periſh in the preſervation of its rights and liberty, than to live and loſe them.

OF EXPECTANT LAWS.

THE generality of legiſlators have never attended to the force and influence of time, nor conſidered how powerful its ſickle would become in the hands of an able adminiſtrator. We have always painted time as an aged deſtroyer; but why have not we viewed its ſickle as clearing away the brambles, the thorns, and the darnel, equally with the rich corn? And under this aſpect, why did we not conſider it as a beneficent being? Does it not likewiſe build every thing, and lay the firſt ſtone of all kingdoms? I love to figure to myſelf its terrible ſickle in one hand, and in the other *a trowel*, which it wields equally with indefatigable zeal and courage; I delight to behold it giving birth to all, elaborating all, and conducting all by inſenſible gradations.

It is reserved for time alone first to announce, and afterwards to accomplish the reform of nations.

What then are those legislators who enjoin immediate obedience; who suddenly overturn the national habits, and think themselves able to controul the genius, the usages, and customs of the people, and capriciously bend them under the yoke of their particular will or opinion? They hasten the law, instead of preparing and ripening it. The great art of the legislator would be first to implant it in the minds of men; they would previously be accustomed to the projected changes, and would, in the end, desire eagerly that same law, which, coming unexpectedly, strikes terror, and resembles a clap of thunder.

A law, for instance, destined to change and renew the face of a kingdom, should be published ten, fifteen, or even twenty years before it is put in execution; and the people, long moulded and trained for it, will adopt it without opposition or reluctance, and even with joy, since justice and reason are fitted to subdue all.

This becomes still more evident, in the case of a law burthensome but necessary, of a law which imposes a new tax. The tax, seen at a certain distance, will not affright, but the law becomes terrible when, without preparation, it shakes our immediate property, like the earth-

quakes,

quakes, which are ranked by man at the head of the ſcourges of nature.

All legiſlators have ſtranded on the important law which ſhould eſtabliſh among us an equality of weights and meaſures. Who doubts, if the law had been announced for a certain epoch, and ſufficient time allowed for reconciling the people to the inovation, that theſe legiſlators would have fully ſucceeded? The ſame may be ſaid of the deſirable law which ſhould remove the diſſimilitude, and conſequently deformity, of the legal code, a diſſimilitude which lends ſuch terrible weapons to chicanery, and nouriſhes, at vaſt expence, whole armies of bloodſuckers.—The legiſlator, announcing his views and granting a long truce to prejudice, would, at length, unite all opinions, and ſucceed in expelling from the boſom of this fine kingdom, that deformity of contradictory laws, which now prevails, and make of all the ſubjects but one people, and one family. The promulgation of this ſolemn law would be haſtened; on all ſides, it would be exclaimed, why have all theſe different laws proceeded from the ſame mouth? Had our kings as many different ſorts of juſtice as there are provinces, cantons, cities, and villages in their dominions? Reaſon and neceſſity ſhould bring about a reform, becauſe it ought not to be ſudden;

den; precipitation is equally pernicious in politics, as in the operations of nature.

If the wiſeſt legiſlators have vainly undertaken to remedy theſe abuſes, which may be regarded as the moſt important of all; if they have met with inſurmountable difficulty in the execution; if they have been obliged to abandon the attempt; if Monteſquieu himſelf has rather avoided the difficulty than ſet about reſolving it; if he has, in ſome meaſure ſanctioned ſuch abuſes; the reaſon is, that theſe adminiſtrators have not eſtimated the force of time, and the preparation of a law by delaying it, and thus throwing into the back ground of the picture, what would have exhibited, in a happy perſpective, its proportions, and its beauty. A ſpace of twenty years would afford time for the paſſions of individuals to ferment and conſume; it would belong to another generation to accept the law, which, being expected, would ſeem to deſcend like a celeſtial gift. Even the death of the legiſlator would impreſs on it a ſort of majeſty; he would ſpeak from his tomb, and having permitted an interval between the law and its execution, he would ſeem to have planned it according to the eternal laws which govern the univerſe. All its productions grow and multiply with time in an inviſible manner, and

in majeſtic ſilence; great and ſublime leſſons to the framers of laws which they promulgate at hazard, and on which they impreſs the ſtamp of caprice! And is it ſurpriſing, after this, that they become obſolete and periſh, like thoſe fungous and half-poiſoned excreſencs which, having no root, fall into duſt?

With the aſſiſtance of time alone can great reforms be effected; ye generations at preſent on earth, ſubmit to your fate! Your political happineſs will be imperfect. But ought you not to ſolace yourſelves with the proſpect of happier days to your poſterity? This poſterity will honour your tomb, and will gratefully thank you, for having prepared a felicity ſuited to their genius; for every people has its peculiar temper, which will unceaſingly be found invincible, whenever it is openly attacked.

POLITICAL WRITINGS.

THE man of talents who commits his ideas to paper, is aſſuredly deſerving of our reſpectful conſideration; but truth is truth alone, when, forſaking *theory*, it is reduced into *practice*: it is then only, that it has a phiſiognomy and an exiſtence, Prior to its being in this ſtate, it

ſplendidly

ſplendidly dazzles the imagination; but it exclusively belongs to *experience*, to produce that degree of juſtneſs and aptitude, which is to ſet in motion all the particular and novel wheel-work the great monarchy of the ſtate muſt be provided with.

I know that reflection and examination are extremely painful to man, who would rather embrace a brilliant error, than yield to a diſagreeable truth. But the ſtateſman who is ſenſible of the many and infinitely protracted calamities, to which an error, oftentimes involuntary, tends, will proceed with a wiſe tardineſs, and give action and efficiency to his plans with a prudent economy. He will wait until the deluſions, which conſtantly hover round a new truth, vaniſh of themſelves ſilently and inſenſibly.

It is indeed ſufficient, that the active germe of the imagination be depoſited; in which caſe, if it be ſound, its developement will not be delayed. An indirect heat, applied with a view to haſten its maturity, would, perhaps, be more injurious than its entire abandonment. It is common to the eye to be hurt by a ſudden light; while a temperate day, which penetrates but is not offenſive to the ſight, is more analogous to the weakneſs, or the pride of man.

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The action of genius ought to be watched with the greater ſtrictneſs, on this account, that it ſometimes ſubjugates the mind in ſuch a way, as that we obey it under a perſuaſion that we are ſtill free. Its power is ſuch, that we fancy we merely follow our own conceptions, while, by its energetic inſpiration, we become altogether mute inſtruments. We have naturally a ſtronger tendency towards what is new and extraordinary, than towards what is juſt and moderate; and therefore, among the paſſions which move us to exceſs, it behoves us to guard againſt that unconquerable love of novelty, which is too frequently miſtaken for the love of truth itſelf.

Upon theſe conſiderations, the ſtateſman ought to make a firm and powerful reſiſtance to the attacks of thoſe reſtleſs ſpirits, whoſe aim it ſeems to be to overturn the old foundations, merely to rear up capricious edifices. He muſt form a judgment, whether the moment is favourable; and while he guards againſt the inticement of new opinions, he muſt, at the ſame time, carefully appreciate them. He muſt not allow himſelf to put on a lofty diſdain, the ſure mark of inſufficiency; but muſt reflect, weigh, and examine. To be wavering and irreſolute will be detrimental to his views, inaction

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being the greateſt of all political crimes: and as events have in themſelves an unſurmountable courſe, he muſt unceaſingly keep pace with them, direct them, if he is able to do ſo, and more eſpecially forbear to weaken their phyſical force. His conduct would be culpable, if, miſtaking ſluggiſhneſs for wiſdom, he ſhould ceaſe to attend daily to the tranſitory and fickle paſſions that ariſe, and ſhould oppoſe to each other the various wills, to give a triumph to his indolence and indeciſion. The life of the political body ought not for a ſingle inſtant to be interrupted; and temporizers of this deſcription are of all poiſons the moſt mortal.

OF BOOKS.

THE world is governed by books. Why? Becauſe the human race requires knowledge, and becauſe every ſucceſsful revolution may be aſcribed either to letters or philoſophy. The pens of writers have wrought a multitude of uſeful reforms: by their influence ſound legiſlation ſpreads in free ſtates, and ſometimes ripens even at the foot of thrones.

With the weapons of ridicule, men of letters have combatted ſanctioned barbarities, and put

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to flight the ſuperſtitious phantoms that have been ſubſtituted for the majeſty and ſanctity of religion. Men of letters have recalled the people and their kings to uſeful arts, and the noble ſuggeſtions of humanity. Men of letters have awakened in the rich a taſte for rural life; they have fixed the public attention on patriotic objects.

Alas! without men of letters where would be the intellectual enjoyment of the rich and poor? Who would have painted the rights of men in ſuch affecting colours? At one time they addreſs the underſtanding of the legiſlator in the examination of the laws, at another, in the exerciſe of the fine arts: the human heart glows with delight and exultation at ſight of the engaging pictures traced by their pencil. In the military, the clerical, and the miniſterial departments, their ideas are adopted; the ambitious purchaſe or ſteal them, and by this expedient procure dignities and riches.

The nation owes much to them, and I am confident the time will come, when it will feel the influence of generous writers.

The man who writes, is at preſent a public orator, addreſſing, at once, all the people that inhabit the extent of Europe. The ſpeedy publication of facts, and the reflection which accom-

companies them, produce moral revolutions. Books (within this century eſpecially) have changed the ideas, and conſequently the moral ſyſtem, of Europe.

We may conſider all thinking beings as at this time forming an immenſe audience, conſtantly ready to liſten with attention to new ideas and diſcoveries; the influence of printing is unqueſtionable, ſince it has accelerated the progreſs of the arts and ſciences.

Let the writer, therefore, engage profoundly in his ſublime occupation, by which he makes ſo lively and ſo durable an impreſſion on the minds of men; let him meditate well what he ought to pronounce to his auditors. Like the orators of antiquity, he does not require declamation and geſture; he ſpeaks at a diſtance, and his voice, if agreeable to reaſon and juſtice, will reach poſterity.

But it has not been my intention to aſſert in this work, that the legiſlator ought to obey ſervilely the ideas of the body which inſtructs; I am perſuaded (as I have already ſtated) that a man of penetration in the cloſet, ſuddenly placed at the helm of affairs, would greatly alter his ſyſtem; and would reſt it upon foundations derived rather from experience than from reaſonings contained in books. He would not

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venture to riſk the fortune of the ſtate on uncertain ideas; he would employ means more material and phyſical.

I have eſtabliſhed then, I preſume, a conſtant diſtinction between the exerciſe of thought and the miniſterial operation of it. I have ſhown that the man who can only think without acting, for want of local information muſt neceſſarily fall into error; and that the man who conſults not, who diſdains the living opinions which ſurround him, who turns a deaf ear to admonitors, is incapable of doing good to a nation, and remains below the level of his age.

May theſe functions, therefore, be united, and without claſhing together. May power and genius embrace, and pardon mutually their pretenſions: inſtead of injuring each other, may they afford reciprocal aid. May power inſtruct genius in thoſe points which ought to be known, in order to remedy the errors that reſult merely from an ignorance of certain facts. Once at peace, theſe two active forces ought to act in concert, inſtead of maintaining againſt each other an oppoſition.

VERBAL ERRORS.

IN all defcriptions of governments I can perceive nothing befides action and reaction, elafticity, the main-fpring which keeps the machine of power in motion, impulfion, and refiftance. "Govern us well, fay the people, and we will cherifh and confide in the adminiftration. If you make encroachments on our property, you put us on our guard; for political duty is entirely founded on reciprocity and mutual intereft." If between the part which governs, and that which is governed, the law of equilibrium is deftroyed, an inteftine agitation will enfue, until the equilibrium fhall be re-eftablifhed.

But fo long as there fhall be among the people many men of letters, nothing is to be dreaded from anarchy. Men having need to be governed, in which ftate it is their beft intereft to be placed, feeing that each individual loves order and repofe, and gives up his enjoyments for the moment, merely to return to them with greater fecurity, it muft follow that civilized men evidently do more than half the work of government; and to this natural tendency to order the well-informed man alfo contributes.

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It is therefore abſurd to fancy that, without ſuch a particular government, a ſtate would be a prey to anarchy. Amidſt the greateſt troubles there ſtill ſubſiſts a certain order; and the moſt neceſſary laws of police, thoſe which are of the higheſt advantage, are never totally forgotten.

On the contrary, in the midſt of danger itſelf, the vigilance of man, then more active and energetic than in the hour of tranquillity, is rekindled. Have, I ſay, no apprehenſions: man may decompoſe the government; but, recompoſing it under ſeveral forms, he will re-eſtabliſh it, and it will never be deſtroyed.

The ſcience of government is not, as political charlatans repreſent it, either very profound or very complicated. It is a natural ſcience beſtowed on man, and is to be found every where throughout the globe. The degree of civilization may be either too ſtrong or too weak; and this alone can be injurious to a wiſe adminiſtration: but men ſtill live with a conſiderably large portion of tranquillity and happineſs, notwithſtanding the political machine of the ſtate is by no means perfect.

Perfection of every kind is a chimera, and more eſpecially amidſt thoſe phyſical and moral ſhocks which are inſeparable from human ſocieties. Now, even ſhould all the political laws

undergo a viſible change, provided the civil laws, and more eſpecially thoſe of the police, ſhould not be ſenſibly affected by this alteration, the ſtate would ſubſiſt nevertheleſs, becauſe human ſocieties are a ſpecies of *polypi* which live in all their parts. They are cut, and they regenerate, the foundation of ſociety being almoſt indeſtructible, on this account, that there are a multitude of little peculiar laws founded on the nature of man, which prevent great diviſions in the ſociety, and reſiſt whatever tends to deſtroy thoſe various aggregations of men, on which ſo many different names have been beſtowed, while every thing in reality conſiſts in action and re-action, that is to ſay, good returned for good, and evil for evil.

This ſimple mechaniſm is ſo viſible, that it is manifeſted in the final ramifications of ſociety, while it gives life to the *enſemble*, of which it is the great and ſupreme law.

Baniſh, therefore, thoſe vulgar terrors which convert into a diſaſter the decompoſition of political laws: theſe are ſuddenly recompoſed when they become neceſſary, and are moſt frequently of no utility to the progreſſion of the *enſemble*. Finally, as the hive is the work of bees, ſo is government the work of men. In political troubles the laws of police acquire a new

new vigour, becauſe they ſupply the place of thoſe which are wanting; and thus does order prevail throughout. To violate this order is not to annihilate it, inſomuch that all thoſe terms of *revolt*, *commotion*, *inſurrection*, *civil war*, &c. are merely criſes to which human ſocieties are neceſſarily ſubject. After the ſhocks produced by action and reaction, impulſion and reſiſtance, they reſume the attitude beſt ſuited to their character, and to the ſpecies of happineſs they covet.

A ſtate in which the people were ſlaves, the nobles ſovereigns, and the king ſole and perpetual magiſtrate, was called an *ariſto-monarchical republic*, made up as it was of anarchy and deſpotiſm. When the people are poſitively in a ſtate of nullity, can there be a republican form? This ſtate, when diſmembered, became a province in the hands of its neighbours; and it is a queſtion what title to beſtow on the government which remains.

England is called a *monarchical republic*. There the government needs a ſtrongly marked influence, unleſs in the caſes of declaring war or making peace. What name are we to beſtow on Holland, with its perpetual hereditary Stadtholder, whom it cannot change, whom it attacks and preſerves, and who, poſſeſſing none

of the authority of other kings, has ſo terrible a power under certain circumſtances ?

In certain republics we ſee every ſort of government alternately make its appearance, that is to ſay, we view the ſovereignty paſs ſucceſſively into the hands of ſeveral.

Monarchy preſents bodies of magiſtracy, which ſuddenly acquire an aſcendancy, and become the ſupreme adminiſtration ;—ſuch, in human ſocieties, are the flux and reflux of power, ſometimes wreſted from the hands of adminiſtration, and ſometimes concentrated there.

Where are the true democracies ? No where, if you except the ſmall aſſemblages of men collected on the ſummit of mountains, in the little Swiſs cantons, and among the Pauliſts of Brazil. Switzerland preſents ſo great a variety of governments, that we need words to expreſs them. Arbitrary bailifs diſtributing blows, and raiſing the fines they take care to pocket, are to be found cloſe to the republican forms. The violence of the people diſpoſes ſuch a canton to anarchy : there every thing is perpetually deranged, as far as regards the internal police, by the little city magiſtrates, who tear in pieces theſe ſmall governments, according to their prejudices, their pride, or their cupidity. Republican liberty is in theſe cantons often but a

name ;

name; and they are rather bad republics in which the abuſes are not yet intolerable, than ſtates wiſely organiſed for the intereſt of all.

Now, of what importance is it that theſe Swiſs cantons have the title of *republics*, if they are, in general, but bad republics, compared with what they ought to be. Here, in the canton of Soleure, the ſon of an artizan, or of a farmer, is not allowed to learn the Latin or geometry, without the good will and pleaſure of the magiſtrates, who, in ſuch another city, make a monopoly of the ſale of bread and wine, and, ſupplying the taverns with the worſt liquors, oblige travellers to drink theſe, and no others, during their ſtay, protecting the robbery and rapacity of the tavern-keepers with a tyrannical and unbluſhing impudence.

It belongs to a well conſtituted republic alone to hold that glorious title; and all theſe little ſtates, which have fancied, and ſtill fancy themſelves to be democratic, are, in effect, real ariſtocracies, ſince the true people of the country, and the greater part of the inhabitants, are ſubjected to the yoke of certain citizens, a yoke which oppreſſes them in proportion to the inequality of fortunes, and that corruption of manners which has found its way into ſeveral of the Helvetic cantons.

It is not ſufficient to decorate governments with theſe impoſing terms: to come at the real ſtate of the caſe, we muſt take a cloſe view of Switzerland, where we ſhall find every ſpecies of oppreſſion, the daily and hourly work of little inſolent ariſtocrats.

By ſtudying with attention the political and moral relations that have at various times ſubſiſted among nations, which, while they preſerve the ſame name, undergo a change of manners and of laws, we ſhall find that political governments are ſometimes corrupted, on this eſpecial account, that they have eſtimable titles. Governments remain imperfect, when they are not ſtimulated to improvement by public cenſure: now there are no people in the world more jealous and tenacious on this ſcore, than the members of the different Swiſs ariſtocracies; while, on the other hand, the democratical bourgeoiſie of ſeveral of the cantons, with very confuſed ideas on politics, are moſt abſurd and unreaſonable, conceiving that the reſt of the univerſe ought to model itſelf upon old, threadbare, ſuperfluous laws, which they, beſides, neither know how to change, nor to follow literally.

The Engliſh have very good political laws, and very bad laws of police. Their capital is diſgraced by robberies and burglaries, which are

followed as regular profeſſions; and theſe odious abuſes a fanatical admiration of their liberty makes them fearful to ſuppreſs. This is the more extraordinary, ſince a well regulated police affords almoſt all the advantages of a good conſtitution, particular ſecurity being to the majority equivalent to general ſecurity.

We find by hiſtory, that laws are not introduced until after a conſiderable lapſe of time and ſucceſſively, it invariably happening, that men do not, at once, attain any thing reaſonable. If civil laws are not ſuddenly brought to any degree of perfection, this is ſtill leſs likely to happen with reſpect to political laws.

When nations, originally, were wearied with a democratical conſtitution, they fell into an ariſtocracy; and when they were diſguſted with that form of government, they ſubmitted to the authority of a chief, either becauſe he poſſeſſed eminent qualities, becauſe he had artificially obtained the ſovereign authority, or becauſe a monarchical government was conſidered as the one the leaſt imperfect. This diverſity of government every ſtate has experienced; and each of them has had different laws.

Now, to thoſe who are capable of reflection, this diverſity of laws forms governments ſubject to agitation and change. Thus the words *mo-*

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narchy, *ariſtocracy*, and *democracy*, are terms without ſignificancy, and differing from each other in dictionaries alone. Without any reſpect, therefore, for theſe *ſcientific* terms, we ought to judge the different conſtitutions ſolely by their effects.

The ſovereign, or the coactive power, will, invariably, be guided by the ſtate of national proſperity: this is a ſenſible and fundamental truth. But to obviate an abuſe of the ſovereign authority, it is expedient that there ſhall be in the ſovereign a dread, and even a certainty of the loſs of his prerogatives, if unduly extended, and that there ſhall be a real and continued check oppoſed to the inclination he poſſeſſes to extend them.

Every mixed and tempered power will hold the ſceptre of authority; while every covetous and inſatiable power will become a ſelf-deſtroyer, readily accompliſhing its own fall. In the order of civilization, the powerful man muſt be deprived of the means of abuſing his authority with confidence and impunity: without this precaution he will infallibly abuſe it.

The government of the laws is in ſtrict oppoſition to that of the ſword; and ſo monſtruous is the union of the two, that there is in every country a conſtant and inevitable conten-

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tion, to prevent the legiſlative power from unit-with the executive. A body will conſtantly ſpring up to prevent the monarch from being at once judge and party in a cauſe. When the equilibrium ſhall be too violently broken, it will re-eſtabliſh itſelf; and, in an enlightened nation, an arbitrary will can never hold the place of juſtice. Such a nation will have its repreſentatives, either in the perſon of its magiſtrates or of its writers: it will never be deprived of an organ of ſome kind, to give a real force to its demands and remonſtrances.

By reducing every thing to clear principles, it will be found, that the genius and ſpirit of governments are pretty nearly the ſame over the whole ſurface of the globe.

The original authority of the nation is inconteſtible, but it is loſt and becomes a nullity in fact. The people are, in ſome meaſure, bound towards thoſe to whom they have delegated the exerciſe of the ſupreme power; and if the nation has a right to withdraw the authority ſo delegated, the employment of that right is difficult, and at the ſame time ſo rare, that hiſtory, in this caſe, ſupplies us with but very few examples. The people, therefore, cannot, without danger, violently tear aſunder the ſocial compact, becauſe, when the reparation is not ſpeedy,

ſpeedy, a diſſolution of the ſtate enſues; and in theſe great political revolutions, it is the higheſt of all misfortunes, not to have in view the attainment of a great intereſt, ſuch as is calculated to recompenſe the nation for the peril to which it ſubjects itſelf.

In all human governments the powers ought to balance each other. If one of them predominates over the reſt, the change becomes manifeſt; and hence it happens, that the fermentation announces the urgency, and the urgency calls for the remedy: thus ought the government to be ſeen in a true and preciſe point of view. The ſpirit and genius of the political conſtitutions which have prevailed in the world, are not in the words, but in the things: by their effects, therefore, ought we to judge them.

Venice preſents a government eſtabliſhed on ancient foundations; and theſe baſes appear incapable of being ſhaken, on account of the inheritance of ſuch a conſtitution as ſeems to perpetuate their duration and maintain their ſcite. When you ſee an old government deviate a little from its integrity and priſtine purity, it is becauſe it poſſeſſes in all its parts a great adheſive power. All the governments of Europe having, in a greater or leſs degree, loſt their primitive

liberty, they are authorized to recover it by moderate ſtruggles, and by efforts adapted to the different caſes.

The beſt conſtitution is that which obliges the wicked to be good, and the licentious to keep within bounds; which provides, that all ſhall be within reach of the law; and that no arbitrary authority ſhall be permitted: by theſe conditions, a well-ordered ſociety is conſtituted, whatever name it may bear. In all caſes, whenever the authority is guided by too ſtrong a hand, its deſtruction is reſolved upon; and when, by a final analyſis, war is to determine every thing, and arms reſorted to, to decide a great national diſpute, every ſupportable government will be ſupported, while the yoke, which can be no longer borne, will draw the vengeful ſword from its ſcabbard.

The model of the government which approximates the neareſt to perfection, ſhould be ſeparated from what is chimerical. The ſhock of the integrant parts of political ſociety muſt be calculated by the human paſſions, the flux and reflux of authority and power being inevitable among beings, ſome of whom command while others obey. The contention they maintain is neceſſary, until the two oppoſite powers become pretty nearly equal, and find their level

on the pivot of the laws. It, therefore, becomes the legiſlator to reject inſignificant terms, and to proſecute his labours on exiſting and poſitive baſes. In certain ſtates, I am at a loſs to find out the ſovereign. The ſupreme power paſſes alternately into the hands of the prieſthood, the magiſtracy, the diplomatic body, the ſoldiery, or of ſuch or ſuch a miniſter, at the head of his official department. Theſe may be termed diffuſed ſovereignties, in which the powers, as is very eſſential, balance each other. Without this ſalutary ſhock, and theſe uſeful counterpoiſes, a part of the ſociety would invade the rights of the other part. In what is ſtiled *monarchy*, is it not certain, that the laws are conſtitutionally ſuperior to the tranſitory will of the ſovereign? The intermediate bodies, when they poſſeſs a certain degree of force, are the repreſentatives of the nation. Are they too weak? They call on the whole nation to ſuccour liberty. The more ſimple ſtates are, the more are they dangerous, becauſe they then become military. Governments muſt neceſſarily be complicated; and in the midſt of the oppoſitions which ariſe, human liberty finds its ſure ramparts.

In the ſequel, nothing can be more fatal than to purſue political queſtions into their laſt entrenchment:

trenchment: this is inviting the unjuſt iſſue of force. We muſt throw a veil over the efficient ſoul of a government; for this ſoul may be found every where. That which gives a play to great human ſocieties, hinges on certain phantoms we ought to reſpect. The balance and wheel-work of a machine are intimately connected, inſomuch, that we muſt not ſay the power lies in the wheel-work, the power lies in the balance, for it reſides in the *enſemble.* Great human ſocieties have a thouſand modes of exiſting; and the action which *governs* them is concealed in their ſmalleſt parts.

EXTREME LAWS.

EXTREME laws ſometimes ſucceed. There was certainly a great degree of harſhneſs in that particular law of Romulus which granted to the huſband the right of life and death, as well over the adulterous wife, as over the wife addicted to drunkenneſs. There was an extreme rigour alſo in the law which gave to the father an abſolute dominion over the life of his children. By the firſt of theſe two barbarous laws the women were, however, cured of their incontinence; and by the latter, the vices heretofore

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ſo frequent among youths ceaſed to manifeſt themſelves : old age was no longer expoſed to indecent railleries ; and the man whom experience had inſtructed was liſtened to. So true it is, that ſuch and ſuch laws are calculated for ſuch a nation ; and that the legiſlator is the man of the moment. But let me haſten to break off this chapter abruptly, as the ſenſible man flies, when, approaching a public place, he ſuddenly perceives the executioners and ſatellites of juſtice in the act of offering up a human ſacrifice to general ſafety or the general will.

SATYRICAL WRITINGS.

IN a monarchical government ſatyrical writings are prohibited ; but, as Monteſquieu obſerves : *they are rather conſidered as requiring the interference of the police than as criminal. They are calculated to amuſe a malice prevalent among all ranks ; to conſole the diſcontented ; to diminiſh the jealouſy againſt placemen ; to beſtow on the people a patient endurance of ſuffering ; and to make them laugh at their ſufferings.*

It would be vain to add any thing to this ſentence, from which we may infer, that he will be the moſt adroit monarch who ſhall allow

low the national diſcontents to concentrate themſelves in pamphlets. Thus will he be forewarned in time, and will have nothing to dread from the effervefcence of men's minds; for the turbulent ſpirits will, of their own accord, betray themſelves.

How great is the character of the prince who can bear to be adviſed: *nihil obliviſceris niſi injurias*. This is alſo a mode of conduct to which the celebrated man of letters reſorts. Every injury which is contemned is inevitably foiled; and every book dictated by paſſion, and a deſire to do miſchief, is ſoon forgotten, while its author is overwhelmed by the public contempt.

Mediocrity, nullity, and turpitude, are calculated to unite and embrace each other: at the view of the ſmalleſt pamphlet they tremble. But the ſovereign who knows his own beſt intereſt, will never be prevailed on to put reſtraints on the preſs. The writers themſelves muſt be made reſponſible, not for their errors, but their motives; and nothing is ſo eaſy as to diſcover in a book the motive by which it has been dictated.

The preſs is a road conſtantly open for the diſperſion through the world of profitable intelligences and neceſſary truths. The terror and apprehenſion with which the art of printing in-

ſpires little men, are to me, I muſt confeſs it, a ſource of infinite ſatisfaction.

Ventre-ſaint-gris, exclaimed Henry IV. of France, when his courtiers complained to him of the author of *l'Iſle des Hermaphrodites:* (the Iſland of Hermaphrodites) *do you imagine that I ſhall moleſt a man of wit, becauſe he has told you truths?*

In vain are circulated thoſe libels which can neither wound nor outrage virtue. The public eſteem is not more due to the diſtribution of certain pamphlets, than are ſcorn and contempt to certain others. A little ſooner, or a little later, truth obtains its aim.

In reality the liberty of the preſs is *inevitable*, ſince to combat it merely ſerves to make its range the more extenſive. The confidant of the man of worth, the trumpet of genius, the revenger of nations, and the officious inſtructor of placemen, the preſs has its abuſes, but is not the leſs calculated ſeaſonably to renew the ideas of the human race.

OF RELIGIOUS LEGISLATION.

THE ſpirit of religious legiſlation, when it does not wander into uſeleſs or confuſed dogmas, enlarges the mind, and exalts the conception,

tion. Man has at all times found consolation in the prospect of future happiness. Great legislators have anxiously guarded against burying man totally in the silence and inaction of the tomb. What could they have offered in recompense to the generous patriot, or the undaunted warrior, who devoted himself to his country? They created the Elysian fields, where man, overwhelmed by the miseries of this life, is to enjoy eternal repose.

The legislators of all ages have regarded this hope as the surest remedy to despair, and as the most salutary that the wretched can embrace, to extricate themselves from the deluge of calamities.

This idea will ever be great and sublime. It is lamentable that, in the sequel, it should often have obliged men to sacrifice the most innocent pleasures of this life to the hope, or the dread, of a future state. Ought this kind, this soothing, this charitable idea to have degenerated into a harsh, partial, and tyrannical dogma?

Hatred grasped this great idea to extend its horrible enjoyments. Priestly rancour opened at will the gates of hell, and shut the region of bliss. The reign of the ministers of religion became more terrible and more pitiless than that of despots. They required the spirit of fana-

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ticiſm and ſubmiſſion, rather than the ſpirit of religion. To have a claim on their charity, it behoved their followers to ſubmit to their orders; to live without apprehenſion from them, it was neceſſary to acknowledge them infallible.

The eccleſiaſtical hierarchy, in its inflexible progreſs, removed all that could lead to reflection; and the ſhades of ignorance were the ſacred groves where it choſe to erect its ſanctuary.

A ſingle pontiff in a ſtate could balance againſt the monarch, or divide his authority. The government of the ancient Jews, when they abandoned theocracy for royalty, preſented the political inconvenience of having ſet the prieſthood above the controul of the ſupreme power.

If this miniſtration were to be entruſted to a man of integrity and virtue, who ſhould be merely the organ of juſtice, the office would become ſublime. But it is of conſequence, that the regulation of the church ſhould be ſubject to the authority of government, becauſe nothing is eaſier, and, at the ſame time, more dangerous, than that the ſacerdotal order ſhould abuſe its credit: as it ſeizes on the minds of the vulgar, it can hurry them, and that rapidly, into extremes.

The modern Perſians have two heads of the ſacerdotal order ; and by this ingenious addreſs, they have avoided the ſingle pontifical power.

It is with regret we behold in France ſuch a multitude of archbiſhops, biſhops, abbés, priors, canons, and all thoſe dignitaries of the chapters who have no direct relation with the citizens. The rectors alone, the moſt reſpectable part of the ſacerdotal order, have a communication with the people, and in that reſpect correſpond to the civil magiſtrate.

All the monaſtic inſtitutions, at preſent, detach the individuals from the ſtate, to link all their faculties to theſe ſecondary bodies. The reaſon is, that the monks, at their origin, lived in deſerts by the labour of their own hands, and conſequently were not neceſſarily connected with the commonwealth. They are now idle, and live in the midſt of cities, but have ſtill preſerved the ſpirit of the ancient monks.

But we muſt not forget that the great monaſteries ſerved as rallying points to the huſbandmen during our ancient commotions, and that collected bodies of Benedictines and Bernardines retained the people, haraſſed by continual revolutions, and ready to emigrate, that they retained them, I ſay, about their religious edifices, ſo as to cheriſh agriculture, which,

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without them, would have been baniſhed, and to maintain the national force, juſt expiring and bordering on total ruin.

Thoſe who love letters, reflect, likewiſe, that without the opulent monks theſe would have been extinct; that their monaſteries have afforded an aſylum to the ancient manuſcripts, and that their fine poſſeſſions, now the ſubject of cenſure and envy, are the price of their labours. It would be deſirable, however, that theſe monks ſhould be more connected with the people, and ſhould thus become more valuable in a political view.

OF ANCIENT JURISPRUDENCE.

NATIONS, half barbarians, have proſtrated themſelves before a juriſprudence, to the nature of which they were ſtrangers, becauſe they could handle the ſword and not the pen, and wanted ſufficient knowledge to digeſt a new code. Theſe people ſeized upon the Roman laws as they did upon their edifices; upon theſe they reſted, and what was wiſdom, grandeur, and foreſight in a great empire, became abſurdity, contradiction, obſcurity, and diſpute among

demi-

demi-ſavage hordes, ſtill conſiderably removed from civilization.

As ignorance needs to be inſtructed, all that was adopted from the Roman laws appeared admirable. This plunder excuſed all particular ſtudy; but it ſoon became the ſource of the darkeſt diſputes. The civilians carried their extravagance into the mutilated treaſure; and it would have been better, that theſe barbarians had been without laws, than that they ſhould ſteal them from ſo majeſtic a code, to apply them to their rudeneſs and ferocious ignorance.

When theſe people had pilfered the Roman juriſprudence, they were incapable of deviſing and framing completely a ſingle law; they were then at the mercy of the civilians, who compiled for them a multitude of propoſitions, more or leſs obſcure, but for which they were paid in want of better.

Theſe nations ſought ſhelter in a foreign code, as in times of calamity a promiſcuous concourſe eſcapes to a deſerted temple. The altars are ſoon employed for other purpoſes.

But are we excuſable in our own eyes? Shall we ſtand unconvicted in the ſight of poſterity? In an enlightened age, when all the arts ingeniouſly cultivated approach towards perfection, we ſtill crawl in the contentious paths of foreign juriſ-

jurifprudence. We have adopted all the complicated thefes, all the ravings of jurifts, all the extravagances of civilians. This fhapelefs and gloomy code, where bitternefs of difpute fprings up at every ftep, we have attempted to unravel, inftead of folemnly committing it to the flames, and creating a new code, a code applicable to our wants, fuited to our genius, and analagous to our character.

To what purpofe is our knowledge? What do we make of all thofe books where philofophy and morality join hand in hand? What advantage does the world derive from the labours of a philofophic age? Have we not learned to break the chain which bound us to thofe old laws whofe load oppreffed us? And have we had the weaknefs to fearch among that multitude of volumes, which ought to be condemned to eternal oblivion, for decifions that muft influence our civil exiftence, notwithftanding the difference of places and of circumftances, notwithftanding a new religion, new manners, and a political conftitution which bears no relation to the conftitutions of antiquity? Have not the French monarchs, (I include all the legiflators) in publifhing a library of edicts, given befides to their people a national code.

Undoubtedly, there are many luminous parts that

that command attention in the Roman laws. Written reaſon can be tranſmitted from one tribunal to another; but is it not time to conſider the defects in the laws, to ſimplify our civil juriſprudence, ſo horribly complicated, and to caſt a pure and ſteady light on all the fundamental points of political and civil right? Theſe are few in number, and following the natural progreſs of things, the whole would ſoon be elucidated. Then would veneration exalt the legiſlator who ſhould preſent that noble benefaction to the nation, which feels the want of it, and calls for it by the unanimous cry of all its intelligent and enlightened citizens.

CRIMINAL LAWS.

ON coming to the chapter of *criminal laws*, the moſt courageous philoſopher, or the one gifted with the greateſt ſhare of ſenſibility, is at a loſs what to ſay: the pen trembles in his hand.

It would require a profound knowledge of the different temperaments, and the workings of the paſſions, to keep within the limits of ſtrict juſtice. While ſome dread ſhame, others are to be deterred

deterred by punifhment alone: phyfical durity, for which we are not refponfible, engenders moral durity.

Here, the moft tender-minded man murders his friend in a fit of anger, and calls aloud for death. There, the Lyons monfter laughs on the wheel, mimicking the wreathings and contorfions of the man, into whofe mouth, when fleeping, he had, by way of paftime, poured melted lead.

The quality of the blood, and the folidity of the mufcles, conftitute beings very different from their fellow-mortals. Among the criminals may be recognized, tigers and bears with the human countenance. With them moral infenfibility proceeds to a ftate abfolutely hardened; while their frozen imagination has never identified to them the fenfible victim againft whom they have aimed the blow.

To annul our laws of blood would, perhaps, only require the example of a villain endued with a temperament fimilar to that of the favage nations of Canada. A prifoner of war, tied to the ftake, and flowly confumed during twenty or thirty hours, fmiles in the midft of his pangs, and bids defiance to his executioners. Now, a criminal who fhould among us afford a fpectacle like this, would appal the judges and fpectators,

and prove, more than do all the books of philosophers, *the insufficiency of punishments*.

Does not education bestow on men another existence? That education in which almost all those are deficient, on whose heads the sword of justice strikes! The terrible instant when they became criminal, we ought to receive as a lesson; since, perhaps, under similar circumstances, we should have been as much to blame as these wretches, provided the education we have either received at the hands of others, or procured for ourselves, had not restrained or prevented the dangerous effects of our physical constitution.

Most certainly, the magistrate ought to conduct himself with humanity towards the criminal. So far as regards the former, who sits as judge, the compact has not been broken by the latter, in whose place, be he who he may, he ought to suppose himself, since he is a man, and his fellow-creature. He should, therefore, hold in abhorence the *bar of iron*, the *pincers*, the *red-hot instruments of torture*, and all those other infamous contrivances by which human nature is outraged: justice is punishment, not vengeance, and death suffices to rid society of the criminally perverse.

The English, who, in framing their govern-

ment,

ment, never loſt ſight of humanity, hold out to all other nations, wiſe and benevolent laws, which they ought without any delay to imitate.

Never yet has a painter undertaken to repreſent, what would form a moſt horrid picture indeed! Juſtice with her wheels, her gallowſes, and her ladles filled with melted lead. Themis is repreſented with a bandage, a ſword, and a pair of ſcales: this image, which is juſt and majeſtic, can be depicted; but the former one makes us ſhudder. And what is it that foils the pencil? A ſecret intimation, that the image is contrary to nature, and ſhould never be publicly exerciſed.

We know why Themis is depicted with a bandage and a ſword: but wherefore the ſcales when a robber is to be tried? What ſum is put into the ſcale oppoſite to that in which the robber is weighed? A contemptible ſum of money, of droſs: is there any equality in this? The murderer may be weighed againſt the corpſe of him whom he has ſlain; and, to the end that the balance may poize, his life muſt be forfeited: it is then that the ſword, which, in civil affairs, ſerves to cut the gordian-knot of chicanery, is employed by Themis to ſever a life inimical to ſociety.

Thomas Morus, Monteſquieu, Beccaria, Servan,

van, Dupaty, and Cretelle, have flattered us with the hope of a humane and regular legiſlation, ſo far as regards the important object of common preſervation. They have rejected thoſe laws of blood, thoſe proceſſes invented by tigers, whoſe maxim it ſeemed to be, that no innocence could dwell in the breaſt of him whom juſtice had overtaken.

Thanks to theſe writers, it has been recognized that thoſe whom the laws have to govern are ſenſible beings, and that man (for ſuch was his earlieſt duty) is obliged to be tender of the life of his fellow-creature: crimes may be repreſſed without the deſtruction of the guilty.

On their ſide, the Engliſh have, at once, afforded us the ſublimeſt maxims, and the fineſt examples of juſtice and humanity. Can it be credited? The penal legiſlation of England has not been the work of the intelligences and ſyſtems of that thinking nation, but the effect of political circumſtances. There criminal juſtice has been connected with the republican conſtitution; and there liberty is ſtrictly interwoven with a compages of laws, from which it cannot be ſevered. It would, however, be ineffectual to propoſe this admirable inſtitution to other governments, whoſe criminal code, grafted, as it is, on their fundamental laws, can never be effectually

fectually corrected. The diſtance is too enormous; and in ſuch a caſe, the judge would inſtantly ſupply the place of the law, either in abſolving or puniſhing.

Governments which want the republican form, are at a loſs how to unite ſociety with independance, force with happineſs, ſecurity with liberty, and the paſſions of each with the rights of all. For want of being juſtly proportioned to the political laws, the criminal laws become preciſely the contraſt of the manners of a nation; and the ſword of the law is then exerciſed on thoſe ferocious or maddened men alone, who oblige the tribunals and the judges to deliver them over to the executioner, to be put to death according to forms.

In the legiſlation, therefore, of a nation having principles, every thing repoſes on a ſure baſis; while the nation that wants theſe principles, arbitrarily immolates the innocent and the guilty, covering its errors by puniſhing alike the robber and the aſſaſſin, the aſſaſſin and the parricide. Ignorant how to proportion penalties, it fancies that it has ſatisfied juſtice, by a public diſplay of thoſe ſanguinary executions, which terrify and appal the heart and the imagination.

It has been ſeen, that every thing is derived from

from the earlieſt political laws. In ſtates governed by too abſolute a monarch, it is impoſſible to have that criminal juriſprudence which does honour to republican ſtates. The ſcandalous aggregations of inhuman lawyers ſpring up at the moment when victories intoxicate a nation abandoned to the fanaticiſm of conqueſts.

Thus, notwithſtanding the ſplendour of ſuch a particular reign, forms reſpecting which the writers of the day were ſilent, and which were dictated by the hatred of the human race, iſſued from the pens of weak or barbarous juriſconſults, and have been preſerved by a poliſhed nation for upwards of a century, to the prejudice of its own cuſtoms and its intelligences.

The nature and deſpotiſm of criminal procedures, and the mad regulations which militate againſt the common ſecurity, evidently ariſe from the firſt violence done to man by the political conſtitution. The code moſt ſuſceptible of perfection, the fineſt monument which wiſdom has hitherto erected to humanity and liberty, is to be found in republics, or in ſtates truly free.

Our manners have prevailed over the abuſive rigours of our laws. Thanks to the knowledge which has burſt forth from one end of Europe to the other, we are become more ſparing of

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the blood of men, which, ſince error has been ſeparated from criminality, no longer flows on account of the ſlighteſt delinquencies. Could the legiſlator be again brought to life, he would abrogate ſuch of his laws as merely tend to haraſs the human ſpecies, and which inſenſibly efface the code of nations. A ſuperſtitious reſpect which ſhould undertake to ſanction in our time, all that legiſlators have, at different periods, invented to reſtrain or to terrify man, either as his imagination may be timid or ferocious, would totally deprive him of an aſylum, and every point of his exiſtence would be taken from him in the name of the law.

Why employ a ſanguinary yoke? It is uſeleſs when the animal is tame and tractable. Reſtraints like theſe, once neceſſary, become horrible chains when all diſorder has ceaſed. Barriers haſtily formed and deſtined to confine the multitude within the ſpot of rendezvous, are broken down when no longer needed: if they were to be allowed to ſtand after the aſſemblages have been diſperſed, every road would be filled with obſtacles, and at every ſtep the paſſenger would be impeded.

Certain cruel legiſlators, almoſt inſtantly after enacting a law, more eſpecially one of the penal code, have been known to diſplay a kind

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of joy at its violation. They ſeemed impatient for the moment to make a conſpicuous example, and to triumph in the very act of the delinquency. How truly atrocious is ſuch a conduct!

If the framing of the law demands a ſacred rigour, a virtuous ſeverity, its execution, on the other hand, requires moderation and even a kind of ſenſibility.

Why does the death of a ſingle man, condemned by a judicial ſentence, intereſt and affect us to ſuch a degree, as to give us pain and emotion, while we behold, with *ſang-froid*, the ſlaughter of thouſands of innocent men in the field of battle? It is not the idea of the innocence of the condemned individual that moves us: it is the ſenſation of our independence which recoils at the power of certain individuals, who, ſeated at their eaſe, pronounce on the life and death of their fellow citizens.

ATROCIOUS EDICTS.

CAN there, in any hiſtory, be found two edicts ſimilar to thoſe of Charles V, in 1555, which ſentenced to death all the Proteſtants in the Netherlands, even though they ſhould embrace the rites of the church of Rome; with

this mitigation in favour of the latter, that they ſhould not be burned alive, but the men beheadėd, and the women interred ſtill living? No, theſe monſtruous edicts are *unique*: they could be promulgated once only; and the reſiſtance in the Netherlands was proportioned to all the violence and atrocity of ſuch a tyranny. Humanity can be rarely expoſed to ſuch outrages, to contrive which has required all the fury of an enraged fanaticiſm; the people accordingly, by a ſudden and natural impulſe, have at all periods of hiſtory oppoſed a terrible force to ſuch monſters of deſpotiſm, have rendered them, of all ſovereigns, the moſt wretched, and have overturned that imaginary grandeur, which had for its baſis an abominable ſuperſtition.

OF JUDICIAL ORDER.

LEGISLATION is the moſt eſſential part of polity. When we conſider the unbounded authority of the Roman cenſors, the executive power of fathers over their children and of maſters over their ſlaves, together with the eſtabliſhment of a particular tribunal to ſuperintend the conduct of the women, who lived in a ſtate of continual tutelage;—when we reflect that

theRomans knew neither ſubſtitutions nor fiefs, and that they were without commerce, we readily perceive how laborious our modern juriſprudence muſt be when compared with theirs, and how much our legiſlators muſt neceſſarily be engaged, and our magiſtrates embarraſſed.

We have our diſtinctions of goods *moveable, immoveable, profective**, *adventive*†, *dotal, extra-dotal, and paraphernal*‡; inſomuch that theſe numerous complicated rights make a delinquency of what is not ſo naturally. Hence ſo many litigious diſputes, and obſcure juriſprudence, laws without number, and laws without rationality. In this point of view does the multiplicity of edicts become injurious to a ſtate. The preſident, Monteſquieu, has vainly aſſerted, that all theſe little laws are a fence to property: they evidently haraſs the proprietor, whom they expoſe to endleſs law ſuits, treacherouſly entered upon againſt him. Defence in theſe caſes is both haraſſing and ruinous; and I conceive that juriſprudence may exiſt, without ſo many nullities of rights of *excluſion*, without ſo great a diverſity of juriſdictions, without the right of *re-*

* Goods coming in direct ſucceſſion from father, mother, &c.
† Goods inherited by the wife during her marriage.
‡ Goods at the diſpoſal of the wife.

demption, and without the contracts of *annual feudal tribute*.

In an age ſo enlightened as ours, ought we to regard a complete code of civil laws, as an enterpize beyond the powers of man, and out of the reach of the ſublimeſt talents? Nothing more would be required, than to ſimplify theſe laws, to eſtabliſh regulations for their preciſe interpretation, to place at the head of this new code the leading maxims of juriſprudence, and to baniſh, as far as it may be poſſible, the formalities and procedures which are as dangerous as they are unneceſſary.

To fulfil this aim, *preciſion* would be the moſt neceſſary quality. When the law is neat and diſtinct, it inſpires a higher degree of reſpect. With a ſimple and natural ſtile, diſengaged from the obſolete words no longer intelligible, ſuch a code might be formed as would ſpeak to every citizen, and the deſire to elude which would no longer be manifeſted.

Judicial order being the firſt beneficial object of legiſlation, the invariable eſtabliſhment of tribunals is infinitely important: by determining the juriſdictions of each tribunal, it would complete the overthrow of the hydra of chicanery.

Louis XIV. had a compilation made of all the laws from the reign of Clovis down to his own time. Unfortunately, the minds of men were then not ſufficiently enlightened; the good and the bad laws were compiled together, and abſurdity was ſeen at the ſide of wiſdom, while cruelty accompanied juſtice.

It was the intention of Charles IX. to reform the tribunals and abridge the proceſſes. By this highly benevolent meaſure he might have wiped away, yes, I repeat it, he might have wiped away the bloody ſtain of St. Bartholomew: it was the beſt reparation he had to offer to his country.

There is no kingdom in which a reform of juriſprudence is ſo neceſſary as in France.

MARRIAGE,

THE woman is a gainer by this contract; but the duties exacted of her are likewiſe more rigorous than thoſe required of the man. Her phyſical wants are conſiderable, and her moral wants ſtill more urgent. The weakneſs of women renders ſociety endearing and profitable to them. The woman becomes, by this contract, the equal of the man: ſhe eſcapes that ſer-

vitude into which her ſolitary beauty would have reduced her; ſhe diſpels the languor and chagrin which prey on a mind unemployed.

I inſiſt, therefore, that the women gain the moſt in ſigning the marriage contract: they ought to repay this advantage by ſubmiſſion, tenderneſs, and mildneſs. The principle of ſociety reſides in the conjugal union. If the family be diſordered by the diſobedience or rebellion of the wife, we loſe, at once, the means of rendering our country happy; for how can we reconcile diſcord in families and proſperity in the nation? The eſtabliſhment of domeſtic order will promote and ſtrengthen the ſtability of the ſociety at large. The conſtitution of the ſtate appears to be inſeparably connected with that of private families. The looſeneſs of domeſtic manners evinces, unfortunately, the decline of public virtue.

What were the rights of men among the Romans? How were they conſiſtent with the domeſtic deſpotiſm which had the diſpoſal of the lives of the children and ſlaves, and with the tyranny of the creditors who oppreſſed their debtors? Who can perſuade himſelf that the Roman laws were any other than a maſs of barbarous inſtitutions? No. Notwithſtanding the rigour of the Roman code, no people, ſays Livy,

Livy, were milder in their chaſtiſements. The laws were threatning, but the national character was gentle. Every one ſoftened the puniſhment pronounced by the law, and diſarmed its rigour. Divorce was very rare among the Romans, becauſe it was authoriſed by law.

OF THE PRIMITIVE STATE.

THE ſteps which have conducted man from the ſtate of nature to that of ſociety, are enveloped in darkneſs. What annals can exhibit ſociety in its infancy? Hiſtory preſents nothing on that head, as the navigator judges it needleſs to relate his uniform voyages on a ſea perpetually calm. The tranſactions of men do not become intereſting till after they ſuffer from their aggrandiſement or their laws.

The primitive ſtate has either been too much extolled, or too much depreciated. At one time the wandering life of the firſt men has been confounded with that of the brutes; at another, there have been aſcribed to ſavages a multitude of ſentiments which ſpring from ſociety alone.

Savages paſs whole days in doing nothing. They are automata conſtructed by nature to the tone of the climate: to ſee one man, is to

ſurvey a whole nation. The cares and anxieties of life are unknown to them, becauſe they reflect not on the paſt, and take no concern about the future. As they know only the moſt urgent cravings of nature, and ſpend their lives in ſatiſfying theſe, by the means that climate and habit point out, they are undoubtedly leſs the objects of pity than if they dwelt under thoſe irregular and capricious governments which afford not to the individual an entire tranquillity. A ſavage is ſurely happier than a peaſant who is ſubject to the rigours of the poll-tax; but the little tradeſman of a provincial town, is happier than the ſavage who taſtes not the comforts of life.

If the ſavage is free, he adopts the ſubjection of natural calamities: and theſe he can neither foreſee nor avert. If he pays no impoſts, he is compelled to adopt a faſhion, which conſiſts of marks on the body, painful to impreſs: his ſkin muſt be painted, punctured, burnt; his noſe depreſſed, his head flattened, his noſtrils bored, his ears extended. This rude ſyſtem exerciſes the moſt abſolute and tyrannical dominion over theſe ſimple men. They ſubmit to this public and national token, to theſe characteriſtic marks, to unite and diſtinguiſh each other; and thus cuſtom has an air of authority which gives it the force of a law.

Thus,

Thus, if ſavage nations have not plans of police and government, they have public and uniform modes of life. The Carib, the Iroquois, and the Topinambou, have ſtupid and monſtrous cuſtoms which aſſimilate them to thoſe whom deſpotiſm oppreſſes. The ſavages inflict on themſelves the moſt painful tortures; and the ſlaves of a deſpot ſuffer meanly, becauſe they dread a puniſhment ſtill more terrible. In this conſiſts all the difference.

I ſpeak not of thoſe nations, the inhabitants of the frozen zones, placed on the barriers of the world, whom nature ſeems to have baniſhed, and condemned, in ſuch barren tracts, to incurable beggary. It is not their defect of mind, but that of their territory.—Social life could never ſtrike root amidſt eternal froſt. The inhoſpitable climate totally ſubdues the manly powers. The Greenlander, and the ſavage Laplander, like the natives of the ocean, which cannot ſubſiſt in the rivers, would always have a natural repugnance to every ſpecies of civilization, becauſe the faculties of the ſoul of each are not leſs benumbed than the muſcles of his body. But I ſpeak of thoſe ſavages who are reared in a mild and temperate climate, and who require not the elements to be controled, and the ſun to be approximated, to form their mind to re-

flection,

flection. These people, with their national affluence, might possess social manners; for to unite men, it is requisite that the soil yield some productions.

The inhabitants of the most northern regions of the globe may claim pity; but the legislator would in vain attempt to civilize them. There are savage tribes, however, which really merit contempt; for being already shepherds or hunters, fishers or husbandmen, they have only to proceed a single step further, to adopt plans of police which might secure to them more ease and more liberty. The Carib, the Hottentot, the negroe, the savage of North America, each of these leads a ferocious and quarrelsome life, and nourishes a national hatred, degenerating into atrocity. They have adopted our worst acquisitions, our arms, and our spirituous liquors. These are the people whom I accuse; they are a dishonor to the human race, for they have all the vices, without one political virtue; nor do they owe the brutality of their character to the climate.

The sublimity of political laws becomes striking, when we behold a Carib through the shameful uniformity of his life, transported by the paroxisms of his turbulent passions, and raving like a person driven by the bite of a mad

dog

dog into a hydrophobia. Nothing can equal the rage of this intractable people when offended; they ſtorm like an enraged dæmon. If they go to war, they reſemble maniacs who devote themſelves to the furies; their hatred paſſes all bounds, their vengeance is implacable.

The corrupted ſavage has vices far more hideous than the civilized man. The degradation of the Hottentot, and of the Negroe, ſinks them into ſervitude: villany ſprings up in the heart of theſe ſavages, with the uneaſy ſenſation ariſing from being ill at eaſe. Negroes commit indiſcriminately every act of perfidy and wickedneſs. The coaſt of Africa contains the ruins of free nature, for there is hardly any medium between liberty and ſlavery. Theſe people, too abandoned to perceive or to reliſh a national eſtabliſhment, ſuffer very juſtly the puniſhment of having neglected it; they have loſt the ſentiments of nature; they have gone backward, becauſe incapable of advancing in civilization. Their folly and baſeneſs have rendered them the ſport of foreign nations; and the falſe, wicked, and perfidious ſoul of theſe people, refuſing all ſalutary inſtruction, has thrown itſelf into the fangs of the moſt ſuperſtitious credulity, and hugged the oracles of ſoothſayers, the deluſions of pretended enchanters, and ſorcerers.

All

All the tribes which are only half civilized, are fierce and knavifh, and have no conception of the reciprocity of benefits. The idea of good is foreign to their nature; nor can their confidence be gained without prefenting phantoms to their mind. Thefe phantoms are changeable, and unlucky impreffions are always thofe which predominate. Their life perpetually fluctuates between perfidious diffimulation and extreme violence: fo true it is, that good laws are requifite to bind men to reafon, juftice, and decency, and to withold from them that unbounded and falfe liberty which degenerates into wild licentioufnefs, which depraves inftead of guiding the inftinct, and which propels men to all the acts that are repugnant to nature and humanity.

God has planted in the bofom of animality, the germe of an immortal being; but the condition of men and brutes, is not in that refpect the fame. It is focial life that conftitutes man; if he fpurns the intercourfe of his fellows, his underftanding becomes an inactive and torpid faculty. When he lives under the grofs dominion of perfonal intereft, he is never fo remote from his nature, that nature which is fitted to attain the higheft degree of virtue and felicity.

What a being is the man who has not entered

within

within the circle of civilization? He turns his force againſt the whole world, and the moſt frightful diſorders do not appal him. The ſkull of his enemy forms the feſtive cup which contains his inebriating draught. If he is victorious, he acts the part of executioner; if he is vanquiſhed, he ſuffers with fortitude. He employs deliberately all the refinements of torment, to which he himſelf in his turn ſubmits: his brutality riſes to ſuch a pitch, that, tranſported with diabolical joy, he roaſts the human victims over a ſlow fire, and gluts his famiſhed appetite with the horrid repaſt. The lot of war delivers into the hands of a neighbouring tribe, the women and children, who are burnt alive, and the cries of anguiſh are mingled with the ſports and dances of their enemies. Behold the bloody ſcalps that line the hut of the ſavage, the bared ſkulls, that, by their number, mark the rank he holds, and the reſpect he claims. Is it a man or a tiger that inhabits this charnel-houſe? Fury and weakneſs lurk in this den: yet in that ſame creature may be lighted up that knowledge which ſhed luſtre on Marcus Aurelius, Hippocrates, and Newton. Man, in the ſavage ſtate, directly oppoſes nature, for he is ferocious and ſtupid. His maners are thoſe of a wild beaſt: he devotes his whole life to in-

toxication,

toxication, and ſleep, the butchering of his fellow, and the feaſting on his enemy.

Man is never ſo near, therefore, to his nature, as when, eſcaping from this frightful degradation, he ſubmits to the laws; when he enjoys the benefit of arts and ſciences, and, rejecting a barbarous inſtinct, he truſts to his underſtanding and his induſtry. The univerſe is the immenſe elaboratory where man is placed to work out the developement of his being, and to prepare himſelf for thoſe wonderful transformations to which he is deſtined.

The ſocial inſtitution is thus neceſſarily connected with felicity and government: it is virtue under another name.

But let us, at the ſame time, diſtinguiſh between the ſtate of nature, and that of theſe ferocious tribes; let us view the firſt traces of true civilization. Moſt of the philoſophers have agreed to call the ſtate of nature the ſtate of ignorance and ſtupidity, and they deſcend to the Caribs in judging of man. But the ſtate of nature is quite different from that which they delineate; the ſtate of nature ſubſiſts in many of our country places, and through a great part of Germany.

Though ignorant of the art of reading, incapable of admiring paintings, unable to comprehend

hend geometry, man ſtill poſſeſſes his own perſonal induſtry: he is not ſtupid, for as ſoon as he knows civil aſſociation, he forms moral ideas.

Obſerve our rude and ſurly peaſants; you behold nearly the middle ſtate of man. This labourer, this workman, is neither a Deſcartes, nor an Helot; he is merely a man.

The term *ſavage* has abſolutely no meaning; ſince, in reality, no men of ſuch a deſcription are found, unleſs from ſome of thoſe extraordinary accidents of which the cauſe is entirely unknown. A ſavage found alone in a wood, or in the fields, without children, and without family, is a *luſus naturæ*, which affords no reaſonable induction: at beſt, he is only a brute in human ſhape, and certainly the moſt miſerable of all beings.

If by *ſavages* we mean thoſe hordes of two or three hundred men, who are ſeen in the deſarts of America, the name is improper, ſince they live in ſociety, and form, among themſelves, a ſort of republic. They ought to be termed *hunters*, ſince the chace is their ſole occupation.

Man has four modes of ſubſiſting. Firſt, nature has given him ſheep, goats, cows, aſſes, camels, and horſes: theſe he may conduct to rich paſtures, may feed on their milk, the cheeſe

it

it produces, or on their flesh, and clothe himself with their hides. This kind of life is the simplest, the most natural, the most peaceful, and at the same time, the most certain. It was, moreover, the first condition of the human race, which is proved by the existence of sheep, and some other species of animals, that, without the protection of man, must have been extirpated. If there had been few men, and many animals, the former must have fallen a prey to the latter; on the contrary, had there been many men, and few animals, these would have been destroyed and blotted from the face of the earth. Thus, the first men were shepherds; hunting and agriculture succeeded; and fishing, and the other arts, were afterwards introduced.

Secondly, nature has stocked the woods with boars and with stags, deer, goats, rabbits, and other animals capable of domestication. Against some of these man was obliged to defend himself; others he was induced to attack: and hence the origin of the chace. Those who embrace this mode of life, are far from being so happy as the pastoral tribes. Their food is more precarious, and their wretched existence is often tormented by want. The hunter must perpetually be employed, since he cannot, like the bees and ants, in times of plenty, make a provision

vifion againft fcarcity and famine. Thefe men, alfo, being accuftomed to live amidft carnage, muft have a ferocious character, and a heart infenfible to pity. Nature abhors fuch a ftate, becaufe it is entirely contrary to the end which fhe holds in view. The hunter cannot be the father of a family; it becomes impoffible for him to tranfport his infants with him, fince the foreft not affording a fufficient quantity of game in one fpot, he is obliged often to fhift his ground: the beafts fly with rapidity, and he muft follow.

The hunter muft therefore allow a number of his children to perifh, or muft wait till the youngeft be able to run before he begets another fon. The laft months of pregnancy muft alfo prove very inconvenient to the women. Sicknefs is another perplexing evil. Laftly, old age muft be facrificed to the public good; the aged muft be butchered through compaffion. Thefe people, ferocious from their condition, muft live promifcuoufly together, men and women; fo that the relation of hufband and wife, father and child, cannot fubfift among them. Two hordes meet; hunger renders them hoftile, and they exterminate each other. This ftate is abfolutely repugnant to nature.

Nature, that tender mother, has anxioufly

watched over the preſervation of the ſpecies, by implanting the deſire of propagation, and by connecting the males by indiſſoluable ties to their females, when the former can aſſiſt in rearing the children. Behold the birds! they hatch by turns; the male ſeeks food for his mate, and lends his aid to nouriſh the young. The pigeon, who breeds every year, is conſtantly attached to his female. The animals that paſture are not ſubject to this law, becauſe nature opens her boſom to the young which browſe even at the time they ſuck. What ſervice, in rearing the young, can a buck render to a doe, a boar to a ſow, a ſtallion to a mare, a bull to a cow? What profound wiſdom is here diſplayed, eſpecially with regard to domeſtic animals! What ſhould we do if every cow required a bull, every mare a ſtallion, every hen a cock? Theſe uſeful animals would induce a ſcarcity over the earth.

But man being feeble many years, being ſlower in growth, as nature ſeems more anxiouſly to labour in him in proportion to the perfection of her work; man being likewiſe ſubject to a multitude of infirmities and wants, it became neceſſary that the father ſhould watch his infant with particular care during the time of childhood. In the interim, the woman becomes

pregnant

pregnant again, and the duties of the father accumulate. It would thus be eaſy to prove, that a man ſhould appropriate to himſelf only one woman, and that from the very analogy of animals; for with reſpect to man himſelf, as he runs into every extravagance, we might be miſled in taking him for a guide.

Thirdly, the race of fiſhers muſt have been the laſt formed. To labour on the ſurface of the water, muſt have been the effect of the arts; it ſuppoſes barks, rafts, oars, nets, and hooks. This trade alſo brings with it a multitude of inconveniencies, and, perhaps, it was poſterior even to agriculture.

Fourthly, divine agriculture has well deſerved altars. Ceres and Triptolemus have alone advanced man to the enjoyment of his true riches. The earth, become immenſely fertile, has permitted man to propagate immenſely. United in ſociety, the huſbandmen have at once enjoyed every bounty; they have continued to be hunters, and ſhepherds; they have even engaged in fiſhing, or at leaſt, have furniſhed ſubſiſtence to thoſe of their body who addicted themſelves to that employment. Our ſociety is, therefore, the moſt perfect, ſince it yields all the comforts of life.

Man beſides poſſeſſes a double liberty, the

animal and the mental. If man abuſes this prerogative, it is becauſe he is in no way ſubjected, ſo noble is his origin. We have the liberty common to all animals, and our underſtanding beſtows on us another freedom which is peculiar to man.

WEAKNESS OF TRIBES.

THE ſavages of America are leſs depraved than the people who dwell in the interior parts of Africa, eſpecially thoſe of the ſouthern peninſula, becauſe the former join the art of huſbandry to that of fiſhing.

They conceal the gold mines that exiſt in the heart of the country, with as much anxiety as the Europeans ſhow to come at them.

They have attached the idea of liberty to the obſervance of their ridiculous cuſtoms. The love they entertain for their national immunities equals that of life. What impairs their force, is their being divided into a thouſand tribes, and ſeparated by characters which cannot be effaced. They will never form one body; and thus the courage of theſe different nations will not alarm their enemies, and will often be fatal to themſelves.

With reſpect to the ſavages of North America, the chace familiarizes them to the trade of arms; but the blindeſt preſumption diveſts their courage of its commanding air.

Our point of honour, with all its proud delicacy, is found among theſe tribes, whom we look upon as barbarians. It obſtructs their ſucceſs, by prompting them rather to deſtroy than to acquire. The ſpirit of theſe deſtroyers borders rather upon rage than on ambition. They do not wage war; they fight duels. To conquer, in their language, means to annihilate: They eat their enemy. They are very ignorant, therefore, of their national intereſts. If theſe various tribes had an idea of a general confederation, they would renew the ages of emigration; and theſe ſavages would exhibit, in the new world, what the Goths and Vandals diſplayed in our hemiſphere. But an infinite multitude of hoſtile republics, parcelled out into ſmall bodies, which entertain a mortal hatred for each other, oppoſe ſuch an union. It would be a miracle, if their diviſion ſhould ceaſe amidſt their diverſity of cuſtoms.

Thus, the European uſurpers, or conquerors, or, if you chooſe, proprietors, of North America, have nothing to dread from theſe people, becauſe it may be preſumed, that they will

never extend their frontiers, ſince, with an air of military diſcipline, they are really incapable of being trained.

OF THE EARLIEST CALLINGS.

THE earlieſt callings of the primitive age were confined to the ſupport of life; and in the ſmaller republics, we ſtill obſerve the traces of this original ſimplicity. No one there thinks of any other object than that of his maintenance. Little cultivated, however, as are the minds of the artizans who, in theſe republics, follow the meaneſt callings, their intelligence is far ſuperior to that of ſavages. The latter, excellently organized for action, are led into error by a want of knowledge, and, more eſpecially, by a want of application. As their ideas are poor, their languages are infinitely defective, and even diſagreeable to the ear.

In the ſavage world there are, however, almoſt as many varieties as in the poliſhed world; and as a proof that brutal nature, to advance towards perfection, has merely need of certain favourable circumſtances, the Peruvians and the inhabitants of Paraguay differ eſſentially from the Algolkins and Apalachites. Nature, always impartial

impartial in her views, forms man precifely for a perfectionated fociety, in which every advantage is combined. If man loiters on the road, if he ftrays afide, if he fhuts his ears to the univerfal and public voice, he thus bars againft him the door to a higher felicity. If the various tribes of favages were to entertain an idea of national confederation, they would renew the ages of emigration, and would figure in the new world, as have the Goths and Vandals in our hemifphere. An infinite number of warlike republics, parcelled out into fmall bands, and bearing to each other a mortal enmity, refift, however, fuch an union ; and in the midft of the diverfity of their cuftoms a termination of their divifions would be a prodigy indeed !

Thus have the ufurpers, or the conquors, or, if you will have it fo, the European *proprietors* of South America, nothing to apprehend from tribes, becaufe it is prefumable, that their limits will always remain the fame, feeing that with an air of military difcipline, they are truly incapable of being difciplined.

OF THE INEQUALITY OF CONDITIONS.

THAT God created men perfectly equal is a fact as unqueſtionable as that the ſun which now ſhines, is the ſame with that luminary which ſhone upon the beginning of the world. But this perfect equality is applicable only to the animal part of man; for conſidered as a privileged being, endowed with that liberty which he derives from his underſtanding and reaſon, and as a being ſuſceptible of every impreſſion of virtue and vice, it is manifeſt, that the degree of this equality muſt be diminiſhed, in proportion to his love of virtue, his command over the paſſions, and the proper uſe he makes of the precious and divine liberty he enjoys.

Nature alſo having enjoined the earth to yield her fruits and bounties to the laborious man alone, and to preſent nothing but briars and thorns to idleneſs and ſloth, equality muſt thereby diſappear.

Inequality is a thing ſo eſſential to the welfare of ſociety, that did it not exiſt, it would be neceſſary to create it politically. But it ſprung up with liberty, ſince it is the inevitable conſequence of good and evil, of vice and virtue, of indolence and labour, nor could any great ſociety exiſt without it.

But

But while nature, ſo wiſe in all her operations, eſtabliſhed inequality, did ſhe not ſet bounds to it? One man fattens to diſeaſe on the harveſts he never ſows, another periſhes with hunger beſide the crops which his labours have raiſed. In beſtowing upon men equal wants, is it not apparent that nature has condemned ſuch diſproportioned, ſuch enormous exceſſes? The indigent claſs, when it feels the yoke of oppreſſion bear too hard, has a right to reſume an active part, and this frequently happened at Rome, under the reign of thoſe crowned monſters, that ſeemed only to vie with each other in wickedneſs: they were haraſſed during their lives by inſurrections, and almoſt always ſuffered a violent and ſhocking death.

Inequality, therefore, admits the diſtinction of rich and poor; the poor, above all, are of great utility to a ſtate, ſince it is their labour alone that forms the ſoul of the univerſe, and conſtitutes the true riches of the earth. Without their induſtry, famine would enter palaces, and the man of opulence would ſtarve, while he repoſed on his heaps of gold. Poverty may, therefore, be conſidered as the foſter-mother of governments; but foul befal him, whoſe barbarous heart would confound it with indigence and wretchedneſs, the cruelleſt ſcourges of hu-

man

man life: these deplorable ills should be banished from every good government. Far from discouraging the poor man and driving him to despair, it is proper that he should view the rich without envy, and that he should hope to procure an easy competence, to which he should look forward, as the recompence of his toil and labour.

We ought, therefore, to preserve with the utmost care the bread destined to feed those who labour, who give life to all other beings. If they are overburdened, they will transport their industry to some other region, and will desert an ungrateful soil that refuses to supply their wants.

Ought we to commit the lot of these most useful citizens to the gratitude, or rather the commiseration of the rich, who, almost invariably, set a value on things merely in proportion to their futility?

It belongs, therefore, to the wisdom of government, not to permit the vegetable productions of the earth to be considered as personal property.

What a preposterous abuse of the word *property*! Where is the citizen, unworthy of that name, who will barter away the life of his neighbour for a few pieces of money? Is not the

the ſtate a confederated community, and ought not bread to be reſerved for the men of toil, who perform the great labours of ſociety ? "*My corn is mine*:" no, wretched miſer, it grew to be eaten on the ſoil which produced it, by your brethren, by your fellow-citizens, with whom you have a contract of defence and ſervice, and not by ſtrangers, who, to-morrow, may become your enemies. Where is the bond of union, where is the harmony, in a ſtate which knows not what portion of riches ſhould be abandoned to the rich, and what portion reſerved to the poor ?

Who is the man that was ever acquainted with this portion ? How would it puzzle miniſters, if they were aſked, I do not ſay, how many men live in opulence, how many cultivate the land, how many are employed in the arts, how many ſubſiſt on the church, in the army, in the finance, at the bar, and in the condition of livery ſervants, but only how many men there are in the ſtate ? If this be known in any kingdom, it muſt be in France, where the ſpirit of enquiry has extended into every ſubject. Yet I have ſeen the population eſteemed ſo differently, that I am very ſceptical on this ſubject.

The ancient nations, thoſe eſpecially whoſe governments were conducted with moſt wiſdom

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and renown, the Jews, the Spartans, the Athenians, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, knew their population by their frequent numbering. But I aſk, are we as well informed on that head? Have we adopted the effectual means of aſcertaining an object ſo eſſential, an object which ſhould ſerve as a baſis to the theory of every wiſe government.

We know how many ſeamen it requires to navigate a veſſel; and how many hands ought we to aſſign to direct the veſſel of ſtate, the veſſel of France? How many ſhould be alloted to the cultivation of the fields, to the ſupply of the navy and army, to the neceſſary arts, and to thoſe of luxury, to the ſervice of the altars, to thoſe of juſtice and chicanery? After deducting ten millions of women, the nobles, the lackeys, the commiſſaries, the prieſts, the monks, the bailiffs, the procurators, the ſerjeants, and the innumerable little ſhop-keepers, how many would remain for the neceſſary arts, and for divine agriculture? I ſpeak not of the hoſpitals, the priſons, the old men or children: but the ſmall number of hands reſerved to produce the true riches of a ſtate, makes me tremble. Adminiſtrators, you proceed at random! You know not accurately, what force you can ſpare on our frontiers, either in peace or war, and you are

entirely

entirely unacquainted with the produce of our land and labour: yet you act as if you were fully master of these important grounds.

POVERTY OF THE ARTS.

FEUDALITY was only the consequence of the poverty of the arts. The lands were waste; the peasants wanted the implements of husbandry; the master, or lord, furnished them, and, for this single advance, he imposed as many obligations as he chose.

It was the ignorance of cultivation that established the theory of servitude. If so much land had not lain fallow and unoccupied by these wandering people, they would never have submitted to ask the spade and the plough from the haughty proprietors; they would never have purchased so dearly the right of asylum, which these inhuman masters afforded around their fortified castles. The neglect of the principles of natural and civil right had originated from the wandering life familiar to these people, who could neither repel the barbarians, resist their attacks, nor seek for lands to cultivate. The *justice* of the barons entailed on the posterity of these

thefe wretched vaffals the fervices due by their anceftors ; and hence thofe laws of mortmain which cruelty and impolicy upheld fo long, in-fomuch, that without the interference of the kings of France, who, to enlarge their own authority, diminifhed that of the lords, by reftoring to the commons a part of their liberty, we fhould, at this day, have been groaning under the heavy hand either of the clergy or of the nobles, too little difpofed to receive notions of found policy, for they can hardly imagine that mortmain is an injury to man, and a real invafion of his deareft rights.

Yet the feudal government had its bright days. The ferfs, paying impoft only to their lords, received from them an afylum and protection : the arts of the times, the enjoyments of the age, fubmiffion, and religious morality, were allied with the ignorance which almoft univerfally prevailed. The caufe of the people was entrufted to the nobles, among whom were fome generous minds. Their ftrange whimfies prove that they were not indifferent to a fort of gaiety, which, though rude, difarmed their pride.

Feudality became terrible, when the fovereigns added their impofts to thofe exacted by the barons : the people had then two mafters ; and oppreffed with a double burden, they were

no

no longer watched over by that vigilant and paternal eye, which, from the top of the caſtles, took a ſweep of a certain extent, and invited the peaſants to ſhare the bounties of the earth, and aſſiſt at the feſtivals of the haughty noble.

The people were obliged to obey two oppoſite authorities; nor, at preſent, do they know which is their true maſter, the monarch, or the proprietor of the fief, for they are obliged to pay both. They are both alike grievous, and have ruined certain baronies, either to the deſtruction of feudality, or to the aggrandizement of the monarchs. Thus did the old laws ſpread among the new, as rotten and decayed trunks are ſeen beſide the green trees, recently ſprung from the boſom of the earth.

War is the mad work of man; famine is the fruit of his ignorance and ſloth. The cultivation of the arts and ſciences prevents famine; it repels peſtilence, or confines it to a narrow ſpace; and, perhaps, we could avoid a train of diſeaſes, by adopting different changes in our manners, our dreſs, our lodging, and our food.

Yes, it would be the great perfection of the arts to ſuperſede that multitude of public and unwholeſome labours, that great number of dangerous occupations which abound in concealed poiſions, as well moral as phyſical; for

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the ſcourges which afflict the human race, muſt neceſſarily be the lot of the nations by whom the cultivation of the arts is neglected.

If the northern part of Europe were ſtill in its former ſituation, when its inhabitants did not plough the ground, we ſhould ſtill ſee all the people who occupy the ſhores of the Baltic, obliged to exerciſe the trade of their fathers, and to procure ſubſiſtence by carrying devaſtation and murder into their neighbour's territories.

If for the ſpace of more than five centuries, Europe preſented a continual ebb and flow of people, towns ſacked, countries laid waſte, empires overturned; it was, becauſe theſe barbarians, who lived chiefly by hunting, as they grew numerous became more ſtraitened for proviſions at home, and were conſtrained to march in queſt of food into richer countries. Hence that ferocity of manners, thoſe migrations, thoſe ravages, thoſe continual maſſacres; for ſuch was anciently the noble and only occupation of all the nations of Europe.

What opinion ſhall we now entertain of the ſyſtem of thoſe who aſſert that the arts and ſciences have degraded the human race, while, ſince the lands were cultivated, ſince manufactures flouriſhed, and ſince, by means of commerce and navigation, all countries interchange

with

with each other their ſuperfluities, men are no longer under the hard neceſſity of iſſuing, like ſo many famiſhed wolves, from their retreats in purſuit of prey?

The arts and ſciences have doubtleſs their inconveniences; but do theſe inconveniences balance the advantages which reſult from them? Can they be compared with the ills that follow the neglect of them? And may they not one day have a ſimple and conſiſtent aim? Beſides, are there not at preſent remedies againſt the luxury which they foſter?

Nations may learn, in the inexhauſtible cultivation of the arts and ſciences, to avoid the cruel folly of waging war; and the inſtinct of propagation may have its full and entire effect without real danger, when agriculture, advanced to its utmoſt improvement, ſhall diſplay the infinite riches that each generation can obtain in the progreſs of the arts, which daily diſcover in the empire of nature, new ſources of life and of enjoyment.

The United States of America alone, by their wiſe and humane laws, are capable of abſorbing the overplus exuberance of the human ſpecies in the old world for three centuries.

Polity, and the arts, will ſatisfy all the wants of the human ſpecies, when civilized nations,

inſtead of a fatal principle of ambition, of vain glory, or of vengeance, ſhall diſmiſs their jealouſies and ſuſpicions, and embrace ideas at once more generous and more ſalutary.

Is it poſſible, that the criminal and ill conceived avidity of governments ſometimes ſhould forbid the earth to yield her treaſures, and ſhould check the multiplication of the moſt uſeful ſpecies?

Half-a-dozen horſes and cows were tranſported by the Spaniards to Buenos-Ayres: no tax-gatherers were there to oppoſe the bounties of nature. Theſe uſeful animals have ſince multiplied ſo prodigiouſly, as to have ſpread over the whole extent of country, from the river de la Plata to the Straits of Magellan; they are killed by thouſands, ſays Admiral Anſon, merely for the ſake of their hides and tallow. Father Labat aſſures us, that, in the iſland of St. Domingo, there is alſo a multitude of wild horſes and dogs, the offspring of a few animals of theſe ſpecies which the Spaniards had introduced.

The human race will never be too numerous, even when every inch of ground, in any region whatever, ſhall be cultivated to the beſt advantage, and when commerce ſhall have ſupplied thoſe neceſſary productions which the territory itſelf ſhall deny.

OF

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S

OF THE GENUINE LOVE OF GLORY.

WITHOUT the love of glory, a paſſion which leads at once to virtue and to renown, the ſtateſman would be deprived of the neceſſary incentive to the career of heroiſm.

He who deſpiſes glory, deſpiſes likewiſe the virtues which conduct to it. The man who aſſerts that public eſteem is not an object of deſire, will ſoon add, with full conviction, that the public ſcorn is not an object of averſion.

Place the ſtateſman in one of thoſe delicate conjunctures, where he muſt ſacrifice his perſon to ſave his virtue: if he reflects on the judgment which poſterity will paſs upon him, he will not heſitate a moment, but will prefer honour to revenge.

Great atchievements may be expected of him who connects himſelf to futurity, who is emulous to paſs through life with applauſe, and to tranſmit a glorious and unſpotted name to ſucceeding ages.

That man is feeble and diminitive, without energy, and without greatneſs, who limits his affections to the ſhort term of life; who, like the brute that regards neither anceſtors nor poſterity, ſubmits to terminate his ex-

iſtence in the interval between his birth and his death.

Would to God I had the thunder of eloquence to hurl it upon the heads of that vile herd which ſurrounds the thrones of the univerſe, and confines its affections within a narrow circle! Who is then this man ſo totally abhorred in the ſpot which he occupies? This ſoul muſt be void of feeling, and his underſtanding contracted: he deſtroys the connections which conſtitute his force; he interrupts the circulation of mutual ſervices. If every one were to follow the ſame ſyſtem, concord would be baniſhed: individuals would be at variance, and armed againſt each other. This man wrapped up in himſelf, could not reaſonably expect eſteem or ſervices from others. What would become of friendſhip, of benevolence, and compaſſion, of whatever aſſuages the miſeries and props the weakneſs of human life?

Ungrateful man! If you are not quite hardened, open your eyes and look around you. Long before your birth, you have been an object of care; enjoyments have been prepared for you, of which you are unworthy. Theſe ſolid houſes, theſe levelled ſtreets, theſe road theſe ancient and hoary trees, theſe ſolacing arts, theſe ſhips which traverſe the ocean, theſe huſbandmen

who

who have cleared the ground, theſe wiſe political laws which lay the foundation of tranquility, all betoken a beneficent genius which has extended its views to poſterity; which has not confined itſelf to tranſient conveniences, but, with a generous foreſight, has embraced the beings which ſtill repoſe in the night of non-exiſtence. And ſhall the wretch arrived at maturity, reaping the fruits of the labours of ages, and enjoying the pleaſures of improved ſociety preſume, that his obligations are acquitted, and ſhall graſp every thing to himſelf, without ſenſe of ſhame or modeſty?

This egotiſt excites horror, becauſe he ſhows the deepeſt corruption, and the moſt obdurate inſenſibility. Alas! ſince he is incapable of feeling the joy of the man who was uſeful to his ſpecies, let him at leaſt contemplate the debt, the homage paid to him, when he left upon earth the traces of a generous and beneficent ſoul! If he is denied the glow of inward ſatisfaction which ſprings from a great action, may he at leaſt witneſs the eſteem, the reſpect, the veneration entertained for his name and his deſcendants, and may he, at leaſt, be zealous of the advantages granted to them.

Our age may be reproached for incredulity, with regard to virtuous actions; and we are too

much diſpoſed to attribute the moſt ſplendid achievements to mean or intereſted motives.—In France eſpecially, we are accuſtomed to conſider all men as having the ſame purſuit, and the ſame character. It is even alleged, that there are only two claſſes in the world, the artful and the unfortunate.

It requires, therefore, in the preſent times, a vigorous, conſtant, and perpetual ſtruggle for a place-man to gain the public eſteem; and when once it is beſtowed on any name, notwithſtanding the efforts of calumny, it muſt be well merited; a new motive for encouraging the miniſter, and for decorating his triumph. He ought, perhaps, to thank his age for this ſalutary rigour; it will turn out to his advantage, ſince he will thereby, ſupport with more force the dignity of his rank, and the majeſty of the laws.

OF THEOCRACY.

A RELIGIOUS government is by its nature deſpotic. It arrogates the ſame infallibility in the civil, as in the eccleſiaſtical regulations: it will ſuffer none to contradict, or to oppoſe it.—This government comprehends the moral and political

political world, as the legiſlator eſtimates better than any other the influence of fear, credulity, hope, and power over man; at the ſame time, it ſecures to each individual his perſonal immunities. The inhabitants of Paraguay were really equal. At preſent, the people of Rome enjoy a very large portion of liberty, and they need not envy ſome republics.

This government, ſometimes paternal, has, therefore, its advantages. The prieſtly ſovereign then imitates the goodneſs and piety of God, who placed him upon the throne: he is more indulgent than other kings, and more ſparing of the blood of men; and if intolerance be excluded, his legiſlation is ſublime.

The manners of the Roman pontiffs were for a long time pure. There are bright periods in their hiſtory, which ſhow that the ſpirit of Chriſtianity had penetrated their hearts. The Jeſuits, by the polity which they eſtabliſhed in Paraguay, did honour to their religion. It was beneficent; chaſtiſements alone were ſufficient to reſtrain that people within the bounds of neceſſary labour. The miſſionaries ſometimes joined the temporal to the ſpiritual authority, becauſe, being acquainted with various branches of learning, they reigned by the aſcendency of their knowledge, ever ſuperior to that of force;

they gave barbarous tribes ſound ideas and wiſe laws, agreeable to equity and reaſon; they planted the uſeful arts in America. Theocracy would be the ſublimeſt of governments, if, after converting men to God, it would preſerve for them that liberty which they derive from him, or if, at the ſeaſonable time, it ſhould rouſe the oppreſſed ſubjects, againſt the efforts of tyranny. When theocracy wields the moſt powerful engine for cruſhing armed deſpotiſm, it will be infinitely ſuperior to thoſe military governments, whoſe forces engage in mutual conflicts and tear the bowels of the ſtate.

Theocracy, founded upon intimate perſuaſion, belongs at leaſt to the man who adopts it with credulity or enthuſiaſm, and hence it reaches the ſublimeſt operations of human courage.—This is evinced by hiſtory. The utmoſt pitch of heroiſm has been diſplayed alone, in theocracies which have never humbled man, as the military governments have done; for it cannot be doubted, that taking all things together, prieſts are more valuable than ſoldiers. The latter are ferocious beings, who act blindly like engines of deſtruction.

But religious governments are moſt ſubject to be ſhaken, and this diſtinguiſhes them ſtill more widely from a permanent deſpotiſm. The novelty

velty of a ſingular idea produces alone a new fanatiſm. If the religious notions ceaſe to dazzle by the charms of novelty, the ſyſtem falls to pieces of itſelf. Policy and bravery will, ſooner or later, overcome the religious principle, which is calculated only for particular times and circumſtances. The Jewiſh theocracy was extinguiſhed by the Romans; the dominion of the Califs was deſtroyed by the Tartars; the Dairi gave place to the Cubo; the emperors depoſed the popes; and the empire of the Sophis has, latterly, fallen by the Dagheſtans. Religious ſtates ought to dread what happened at the pillage of Rome; the ornaments of the altars ſerved for the ſport and amuſement of the ſoldiery.

OF CHRISTIANITY.

WHEN the Chriſtian religion firſt found its way into Japan, the people, groaning under the yoke of the nobles, manifeſted a ſingular attachment to a moral ſyſtem, ſo thoroughly calculated to efface the odious diſtinctions between man and man. On the one hand they were daily expoſed to the unreſtrained vengeance of their rulers; while on the other, they had a glimpſe of real happineſs in the benevolent maxims of

Chriſtianity:

Chriſtianiry: and, in the mean time, the experienced arrogance and ferocity of the nobles, formed a ſtrong contraſt to the gentle doctrines of the miſſionaries. Chriſtianity had, in conſequence, ſtrong proſelytes in Japan, becauſe the people there were very wretched. Its principles will remain engraven in the hearts of many of the Japaneſe, becauſe they will conſider them as excellently fitted to overturn the tyranny of the moſt deteſtable government that has ever afflicted the human race.

And when, in old times, the inhabitants of France ſo readily embraced the Chriſtian religion, it was becauſe they ſought in that religion a protection from their miſerable ſlavery. They threw themſelves into the arms of the clergy, who, at that barbarous æra, while they preſented to them knowledge, held out to them a relief from the yoke and tyranny of their atrocious conquerors. They then, in reality, beſtowed on them an exiſtence, which, without their mediation, they could not have enjoyed; thoſe who ſubmitted to the baptiſmal ceremony ceaſing to be ſlaves. Now, if the clergy had not ſince degenerated; had they retained their original ſpirit, inſtead of uniting, in proceſs of time, with the princes by whom the people were oppreſſed, ſo as to obtain a ſhare of the

national

national ſpoils, we ſhould, inſtead of a hiſtory of certain great houſes, have had handed down to us a hiſtory of the people of France; and inſtead of a detail of the intereſts of a few warlike nobles, we ſhould have had to peruſe a truly intereſting hiſtory, ſuch as are thoſe of the Romans, Greeks, and Engliſh.

The very few good kings France has to boaſt, evince that the clergy have not, in theſe times of greatneſs and ſplendour, kept their promiſes with the unfortunate and numerous part of the nation: they, therefore, cannot now claim their ancient indulgencies, more eſpecially as they have altogether changed their ſyſtem, and are become the ſlaves of riches.

To diminiſh theſe riches is now the intereſt of the bulk of the citizens. Juridically ſpeaking, the privileges of the clergy are inconteſtible; but the ſacrifice of them is neceſſary, political, and natural.

The law of the Chriſtian religion, which forbids the uſe of meat at the time when animals multiply their ſpecies, is tranſcendantly wiſe; as is alſo that which, inſtead of a plurality of wives, allows one only. The latter, it is to be remarked, is as conformable to nature, as it is founded in the trueſt policy, ſince it is proved, that

that in every country the births of males and females are pretty nearly equal.

OF THE JESUMI.

THE Jesumi is a ceremony practised at Japan, to discover those who are attached to Christianity. It obliges every one to tread on the image of our Saviour fastened to the cross, and on that of his holy mother. The images are carried from house to house; and to this profanation even infants at the breast are subjected.

We are told that the Dutch, impelled by the insatiable cupidity which marks their character, and desirous to trade exclusively with the Japanese, recommended to the latter, with a view of barring the door of commerce against others of every denomination professing Christianity, to place a crucifix on the ground, at the spot of debarkation, thence to ascertain whether he who should land were or were not a Christian.

In their commerce with the Japanese, the Dutch have accordingly renounced Christianity, treading beneath their feet the holy image without scruple and without reluctance. They have thus

thus monopolized the trade of Japan, the English having refuſed to follow their impious example.

This act of treading on the croſs has been vindicated by ſeveral Dutch caſuiſts, on the plea, that their countrymen could not otherwiſe obtain admiſſion into Japan. They ſeem to conſider it merely as a neceſſary diſſimulation, becauſe the intention which gave riſe to it was good: *auri ſacra fames.*

OF THE ROMANS UNDER SYLLA AND MARIUS.

MACHIAVEL wrote his work, entitled *the Prince*, for wicked men: infernal as it is, the practice before his time ſurpaſſed all his theory.

In the time of Sylla and Marius, the Romans, I am fully perſuaded, were the moſt daſtardly of all the human beings who ever exiſted on the ſurface of the globe.

By an expreſs law, every citizen was permitted to ſlay him who ſhould prove a tyrant: and this law, heretofore engraven in the heart of every Roman worthy of that name, was then not enforced! At the time of the proſcriptions, he who had ſeen on the bloody liſts the name of his father, of his brother, of his friend;—he

who had witneſſed their death ; this vile and cowardly man, forgetting that he had an arm, and that the tyrant had but one life, forbore to plunge the poignard in the boſom of the executioner of his family, to enjoy, at leaſt, the pleaſure of expiring the avenger of the ſacred rights of humanity, and the deliverer of his country! At the death of Sylla, the women ſtripped the ornaments from their heads, burned incenſe, and honoured the monſter who had tranquilly ordered the maſſacre of his fellow citizens, who had enriched his proſtitutes, jeſters, and ſatellites with their ſpoils, and who, to the moſt ſanguinary ferocity, united the vileſt debauchery! Upon Ceſar's death, this ſame free and revengeful nation, wrought upon by the artifices of a vain eloquence, ſeized on firebrands to burn the houſes of the conſpirators, the heroical defenders of their country! What is man then? And how, from entertaining the moſt elevated ſentiments, does he fall into ſo grovelling, ſo degraded a ſtate? It would, then, appear, that tyranny can with great eaſe cajole men, even after having ſpilt their blood! Are they forgetful of their calamities? Are they almoſt inſenſible of thoſe which do not perſonally attack them? or does the terror, with which they are inſpired by the cruelties they witneſs, take ſuch a hold

a hold on the mind as to make it blunt and torpid? Who will explain the human heart? And how does it ſupport evils upon the termination of which it cannot calculate?

A nation which underſtands not its rights, which ſupinely bears its political ills, which fancies its calamities inevitable, and which never turns its reflections towards theſe great and important objects, is calculated for wretchedneſs and ſlavery.

The natural rights of man have been thus clearly defined: *man has a right to whatever can contribute to his welfare and felicity.* He has therefore a claim to happineſs, which, as a thinking being, he ſhould both ſeek, and endeavour to extend.

The wandering hordes of ſavages give us a truer inſight into the laws of ſociety than do ſeveral of the modern ſtates. There we may perceive an aſſemblage of ſimple and natural laws, which, notwithſtanding we, in our deſcriptions, have ſo variouſly jumbled and confuſed them, are delicately interwoven with each other.

When an immenſe nation conſiders itſelf as the property of one man, ought it not to be neceſſarily puniſhed for its cowardice, its weakneſs, and its ignorance? What would otherwiſe

be

be the lot of thoſe generous minds who know how to reaſon and defend themſelves?

The ſovereign muſt be made to be juſt, that is to ſay, he muſt be watched. It is on this account that the Engliſh are fond of political ſtorms, by which the monarch is kept awake.

Wherever the public voice can venture to make itſelf diſtinctly heard, the prince, and his miniſters, are reſtrained, and the ſupreme power prevented from exceeding certain limits. The ſubjects then forget the unlimited power of the ſovereign; and, certain that he will be kept in check by the bonds of opinion and decorum, rely on the aſcendency of national manners, to which, they think, no violence will be offered. Princes would fancy themſelves outraged if they were to be called by the appellation they dread; and on the ground of this apprehenſion of theirs, they are conſtrained not to abuſe their authority.

On his ſide, the ſovereign ſees the ſurrounding nations attentive to the cries of the people, and diſpoſed to repeat them. He dares not unbluſhingly brave the opinion of enlightened kingdoms. If he nouriſhes any deſigns, he gives them the ſtamp of the public welfare, at the ſame time that, jealous of the virtue of the real patriots, he aſſumes, in ſpite of himſelf, an air

of

of nobleneſs and grandeur, and ſhudders at the very idea of being obliged to contemn himſelf.

Solon, when he was aſked what was the moſt deſirable government, replied with much juſtice and truth: *that in which an injury done to an individual intereſts all the citizens.*

The people, unable to calculate upon dangerous changes, have, notwithſtanding, the means of coming at the pernicious tendency of any attacks made upon liberty. As the true principles of policy reſide in the human underſtanding, that is to ſay, in the nature of the affections of man, ariſing from thoſe ſecret ties which unite men in ſociety, the people, without wandering into abſtract queſtions, perceive, at the firſt glance, whether their privileges are reſpected. Thus, in England, whenever the liberty of the preſs ſhall be infringed, the *tocſin* will be ſounded; and thus, in France, no ſooner does the monarch name a *commiſſion*, than an univerſal perturbation enſues.

All that I have ſaid goes to prove, that a natural conſtitution of government changes and varies; and that the members of the ſociety conſtitute the ſociety itſelf much more than does the ſovereign power.

Thoſe muſt be blind who cannot perceive that nature alſo is a legiſlator, ſince ſhe has

placed an insuperable barrier before the true constitution of states. When this constitution deviates too far from the rights of man, it suddenly resumes its natural form, and dictates the laws of the great revolutions by which it is regenerated. As soon as you perceive rebellion and revolt, be sure that a part suffers, and aims at making the tyrants suffer in their turn. The efforts of the latter may be terrible; but the elasticity of those who suffer must and will have its play; there are invisible ties which depend not on policy.

A king is dethroned amidst violent convulsions; and this is but the fall of one man. The new government takes a stable form; and the family deposed ought no longer personally to interest the general system.

LARGE STATES, ANCIENT STATES.

THE more extensive states are, the more remote is their antiquity. The larger states are situated in Asia; and the Asiatics were, therefore, the earliest acquainted with the advantages of civilization. It surely required time to unite a multitude of tribes, and form them into a mighty nation obedient to the laws.

The

The Chineſe had acquired many branches of induſtry, when we were ſtill ſavage hordes.

The Aſiatics have long clothed us, and have taught us how we ſhould be clad. While we were feeding on our bitter acorns, they truſted not their ſubſiſtence to chance. The ſcholars have now outſtripped their maſters; but the time will come, when theſe people, who imparted to us the arts, ſtill in their infancy, will become our rivals. They will follow our progreſs; ſo certain is the communication of knowledge, and the flux and reflux of the ſciences throughout every part of the globe.

The wider an empire is, the more need has it of a principle of unity, that is, of a ſingle chief; becauſe the cries and wants of the diſtant provinces require a prompt auxiliary armed with the public force. Hence large ſtates are more than any other expoſed to fall under the arbitrary control of a monarch. The empire preſenting the moſt extenſive ſurface, has, at all times, had moſt enemies to contend with, and the multiplicity of paſſions within its confines have been more difficult to reſtrain. It became neceſſary that the military body ſhould be entruſted to one leader, and when a nation is obliged to keep a powerful army on foot, the ſoldier kept in pay, and moulded to ſlavery, ac-

knowledging no authority but that of his commander, and defpifing every other law, either active or dormant, becomes an enemy to the liberty of others. To avoid difmemberment or conqueft, a vaft empire muft make great facrifices of its partial liberties, elfe it would experience domeftic anarchy and foreign devaftation. There is no compenfation but the enjoyments which the meaneft citizen may tafte, when, confounded among the multitude, he meets with all the arts that charm leifure, and finds in the ufeful laws of police, the convenience, the relief, and the pleafure which the political laws deny him.

At Rome, the human race was not free, fince the Romans had their lands cultivated by flaves kept in chains, who were obliged to fleep in moats, from which the ladders were nightly removed. Three-fourths of the inhabitants of Rome were flaves: barbarous mafters caft them alive into the ponds to feed the lampreys. The unfortunate wretch, who, happening to break a coftly vafe in the houfe of Vedius Pollio, with whom Auguftus was at fupper, entreated to be killed before he was delivered to the fifhes, could not obtain this fmall favour, notwithftanding the interpofition of the emperor. Was this a republic?

At

At Athens, there were twenty ſlaves for one citizen. At Lacedemon, the ſlaves were expoſed to every danger; they were way-laid, and butchered by thouſands, in the courſe of a ſingle night. Was this a republic?

Will it be aſſerted, that a republic reſides in St. Domingo, or in the greater part of the Indies, where the thirſt of gold and inhumanity have erected a throne of iron? For if the perſon is not free, if real ſlavery oppreſſes the majority, theſe vaunted republics exhibit only the manners and cuſtoms which ſtill prevail in Barbary. The eſſential property of a freeman, which conſiſts in the command of his own perſon, having been denied the bulk of ſubjects of theſe ancient governments, the liberty which remained to the few ought not to be reckoned; and theſe ſtates ſhould be eraſed from the liſt of republics, the character and natural liberty of which are granted to each individual.

The Parthians, on the contrary, who treated ſlaves like children, who, in default of political liberty, granted them natural liberty, and philoſophical liberty, founded on humanity, the Parthians deſerved the name of republicans; for we ought to ſearch governments to the bottom, and judge them by their effects, not by the appellations they receive. Remove from the an-

cient republics the maſk of liberty, and from certain ſtates that of ſervitude, and you will be convinced that the different ſorts of liberty muſt be eſtimated by the degree of reſpect paid to the human race, and by the nature of the treatment beſtowed on ſlaves or domeſtics.

In this view the tribes ſtyled *barbarians* have better maintained the privileges of man, and have cheriſhed a deeper germ of republican principles, than many poliſhed nations, which, by the diſorders of their police, feudal tenures, and the point of honour and ſuperſtition of the nobility, have haraſſed the human ſpecies in an infinite variety of ſhapes.

OF PLATO.

THE republic of Plato is altogether viſionary and fanciful; but his book has a fatal tendency, becauſe it holds out an idea of a perfect government, as if ſtates, regulated by laws, however wiſe theſe may be, were not inhabited by men always ready to abuſe the laws, and to overturn the edifice of the legiſlator.

The maxim which has been found ſo true in morals, and which in policy is inconteſtible, *that the* BETTER *is the enemy of the* GOOD, ſhould be

be carefully meditated by the legiſlator, who will otherwiſe not merit that ſublime title. There is a certain order of things in which the law ought to give way, and accommodate itſelf to the imperious paſſions; for it is better to lay open the dike, than to ſuffer the ſtream to burſt its banks. In politics, an attentive regard to the caprices of fortune, ought, at all times, to render the ſtateſman circumſpect; and, as it is impoſſible to calculate upon the future, a ſenſible and humane policy will turn its view to the preſent, and, yielding to the prejudices of men, will be ſenſible, that to govern with the beſt effect, it will be abſolutely neceſſary to pleaſe.

It has been obſerved, that ſome nations glory in having beſtowed on their princes all the authority neceſſary to do good, without inveſting them with the power to do ill. Upon attending carefully, however, to all the drift of this obſervation, we are utterly ſurpriſed at perceiving, that, by depriving theſe princes of the power to do ill, they are crippled and prevented from the accompliſhment of the good: they muſt be ſpectators of the new abuſes contrived by the wickedneſs and degeneracy of men, abuſes which a government alone can repreſs.

It has, perhaps, been noticed, that I have conſtantly avoided touching on the type of the

Engliſh government, becauſe I view it as a political phenomenon. This admirable conſtitution depends on phyſical locality; it may laſt for ages, it may fall in an inſtant. It is a machine ſuperiorly organized; but the elements of which it is compoſed, are, I may venture to ſay, contradictory to all the common rules of policy. The machine of the Engliſh government moves, and that ſometimes in a ſuperior way: it is an object of ſurpriſe to every reflecting mind. It ſtrikes me, that its equilibrium is maintained, more by a great maſs of intelligence, than by the mechanical organization of its parts; and what confirms me in this opinion, is, that when the movement ceaſes, the national genius ſtill defends the laws, which have then no other baſis.

Happy Engliſhmen! bleſs above all the ſea which ſurrounds you, ſince, without that, your conſtitution would not have taken root. You have good laws, but ſo much has nature favoured you, that even had theſe been bad, you might ſtill have flouriſhed. A precious liberty has fallen to your lot; but this already in a ſlight degree oppreſſes you. Be careful leaſt you one day ſink under it; for political liberty has its boundaries, and I do not think them very extenſive.

Englishmen ! time has by degrees done every thing for you, while your policy has altogether consisted in profiting by events, and on this policy your reason seems to have impressed its character and its stamp. In each state, if I may be allowed the expression, there are a flux and a reflux of powers. Despotism has lost several empires: be fearful that liberty does not ruin yours. Preserve your political terms, since they are so dear to the people; but still yield to the circumstances which may occasionally suggest new ideas.

Englishmen, pardon my fears.—I never see a living being confide solely in the equilibrium, but I tremble for him, while he fills me with admiration.

THE CHINESE.

AN empire composed of two hundred millions of individuals, such as is China, at the first view excites our admiration; but it is impossible that so great a mass can be so organized as to favour the development of all the faculties of man. The natives of the east are slaves, because they have continued ignorant of those great principles of government that lead to liberty.

berty. In China, the eternal impriſonment of the women is an unjuſt cuſtom, which, in the moſt direct way, attacks the principles of ſociety. The excluſion of ſtrangers from the empire is a ſavage law, by which the natural ſociety between all men is proſcribed ; while pride, ignorance, and an ill-conceived terror, have built the impregnable wall that ſhuts out human intelligences.

The Chineſe labour, therefore, under a kind of ſlaviſh apathy, which obliges them blindly to ſubmit to old laws they have not the genius to analyze. By theſe laws the general principles of ſociety have been violated ; and the tyranny exerciſed over the women has deſtroyed the aſylum of manners. Thus does this nation, in its habitudes, appear rather to ſleep than to live.

In a word, the art of governing two hundred millions of individuals, and that in a manner worthy of their noble origin, appears to me to ſurpaſs the powers of the human mind. We are not ſufficiently inſtructed to be capable of truly eſtimating the moving forces of an empire, the dimenſions of which are ſo very extraordinary.

ADDRESS OF AGRICULTURE TO THE CONSTITUENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.*

Gentlemen,

RECEIVE the humble petition of *Agriculture*, firſt creditor of the ſtate, mother of all the arts and all the comforts of life, a mother the moſt tender, the moſt feeling, and the moſt worthy of your protection :—

Againſt certain perfidious arts, equally proud and uſeleſs, that under the titles of *painting*, *ſculpture*, *architecture*, and their endleſs train of dependants, have degraded the labour of the

* The public prints have not mentioned an addreſs recently preſented at the bar of the National Aſſembly, by a woman in every reſpect intereſting, and to whom all the world owes reſpect. I ſhall deſcribe her appearance.

Crowned with heads of corn, ſhe wore a veſtment of green ſtuff: ſhe held in one hand a flowering ſhrub, which ſhe eyed with the tenderneſs of a mother, and in the other the ſtock of a vine, which ſerved for a ſtaff. On her robe was traced the circle of the twelve zodiacal ſigns. Her air was nobly ſimple, and modeſt, her figure majeſtic, and her deportment full of gravity. Her veiled, but prominent boſom, beſpake the good mother of a family: ſhe came without ceremony, and without attendants; ſhe carried not on her breaſt the *revenue of a duchy*; her necklace ſupported a *fleece*, from which hung a ſmall *plough*, a *ſickle*, and a *bee-hive*.

[The reader will perceive that this is emblematical.] *Tranſlator.*

hand,

hand, and the cultivation of the ground; while they are only ill formed children, ſhowy on the one ſide, and monſtrous on the other, who ſuck my milk, and unprofitably dry up my breaſts.

Aſſerting that, though I exiſted before any of the fine arts, though without me no being, no tree, no plant could live or yield fruit; ſtill the futile arts, the unſubſtantial ſciences have plainly uſurped the preference over me, and are much more honoured in the *academies*, and in the diſcourſes of rhetoricians.

If whatever lives requires food proportioned to the capacity of its exiſtence; if whatever grows muſt ſupport its progeny at the expence of its own growth; all that lives, and all that grows, owe a tribute of labour to the ſoil. But theſe brilliant arts, which ought to have been conſecrated merely to the decoration of temples, of public monuments, or of the palaces of legiſlature, have become corroding ſcourges, ſince they have been ſuffered to paſs their natural bounds, and have been abandoned to the pride and caprice of opulence. They have carried deſolation into my rich domains; they have turned aſide the courſe of my bounties. How much have I not had to regret the loſs of ſo many hands, and the ſcandalous dwellings of ſtateſmen fattened by my calamities? Alas! the genius

genius of the arts, granted to man to celebrate immortal achievements and encourage virtue, forgetting its origin and its noble deſtination, has not bluſhed to enliſt under the banners of the vices, and to proſtitute to them its guilty pencil! This falſe taſte, aſſuming new changes at will, has, on all ſides, ſpread its diſmal ravages. Proud architecture, ſtripping me of immenſe poſſeſſions (entruſted to my care to ſupport my children) has devoted them to a pompous ſterility, while *painting*, ſtill more fatal, has ſwallowed up my riches in luxurious ſaloons or in dark *boudoirs*.

Aſſerting, moreover, that, though I am a thouſand times handſomer, and more ſplendid than *commerce* (my flouriſhing child, notwithſtanding, but incapable of performing any thing without my aid, being only the carrier, while I furniſh the materials) yet the latter ſeems to command all the public attention, to my great detriment. You know, however, gentlemen, that all the charms of the world firſt proceeded from me; that I multiply men by augmenting their ſubſiſtance; that I ſupport generations in the primœval ſtate of health and ſtrength; that no philoſopher will ever explain my phœnomena; and that the beauty, grandeur, and power of a ſtate depend ſo eſſentially on me, *that*

without

without my aſſiſtance, all men would periſh through hunger.

My heart is of all the moſt ſocial, as it is the moſt innocent; without me there could be no great ſtates; the neglect of my labours throws nations into indigence and barbarity. Victory gave all the earth to the Romans; but theſe haughty conquerors refuſed to cultivate it, leaving to bondmen the dreſſing and clearing of the fields. This criminal diſdain reverted againſt them, and contributed more to deſtroy the empire, than all the barbarians who invaded it; an agricultural people poſſeſſes the trunk of the commercial tree; all the fruits belong to it, while others obtain only a forced and precarious ſhare.

For theſe reaſons, gentlemen, provide that *agricultural labours* ſhall be re-eſtabliſhed in the higheſt honour, ſo that France ſhall henceforth be a kingdom ſplendidly and truly agricultural; becauſe ſuch is the *real power* conferred on it by nature, and ſuch ſhould be the immortal *baſis* of its proſperity. I loudly repeat it, gentlemen, I am evidently the firſt creditor of the ſtate, and I ſhall fully diſcharge all the debts of the ſtate, provided the ſtate will reſtore whatever is mine, and pay me all that is my due.

I declare that if, inſtead of converting my la-

bourers into lackeys, my ploughs into the harneſs of pride, my corn into the duſt of vanity, France ſhould will otherwiſe, ſhe will, with my aſſiſtance, become the granary of Europe; and far from ſeeking your timber, your hemp, and your flax in foreign countries, you will furniſh theſe articles to other kingdoms. If the French would, in the ſequel, renounce the blind rage of *handling* gold, of working on barren metals, I would render them richer in *commodities*, and even in *gold*. For God has willed, that man ſhould toil the ground to obtain conſtant riches; on his labour and induſtry, the bounty of the ſeaſons depends; the ſtars, the ſhowers, and the winds have, by turns, their ſalutary influence: and as the foſtering treaſures of abundance are not due to *chance*, the preſents which I pour forth, are always in proportion to the care beſtowed on cultivation.

Accept, gentlemen, an hundred thanks, for having reſtored to my empire *the domains of mortmain, which I never ſurveyed without weeping eyes.* Once more become national property, you ſhall behold how they will flouriſh, when induſtry, more active, and infinitely more varied on ſmall farms, ſhall have ſtampt on them the impreſſion of a new and productive labour; whereas, hitherto, of all theſe *immenſe domains*, there

there remained only a certain *royal water*, which, when decompoſed, yielded nothing but the poiſon of ariſtocracy. The Goths, the Vandals, and the barbarians of the North, jealous of the *chace*, and valuing this exerciſe alone, it is they who have inflicted on me every poſſible wound. The catalogue is dreadful: there the *tything-men* waged war on *artificial meadows*, thoſe paſtures ever luxuriant: there the intendants ſeized or burnt the hives of the laborious bees, thoſe precious inſects which Virgil has ſung: they were expelled by the *impoſts*; the *intendance* annihilated the wax and honey, which were, therefore, procured at a great expence from abroad. Soon would feudality have reclaimed the ſeignorial territory; but you, gentlemen, came. What twenty kings of France, and fifty-ſix miniſters, neither would, nor could perform for me and my children during the lapſe of many ages, you have happily accompliſhed in the ſpace of a ſingle year.

Complete, gentlemen, the favouring of the moſt neceſſary, the richeſt, and the moſt extenſive eſtabliſhment in the ſtate; complete the inſtructing of men in their felicity, and the propagation of a ſound polity, till now, too much neglected. Already you have taught my children to know their *natural dignity*, their ſcale

of

of importance, and above all, their ability to promote the public profperity. You have delivered me from *feudal* right, from *royal and feignorial corvées*, which fwayed with an iron hand, and difputed the inheritance of my labours. Thofe old *feudal* and *fifcal laws*, which jointly difgraced the foil of France for fo many centuries, are at laft annulled. Your bounties, gentlemen, are ineftimable; they are at the fame time fo extenfive, that the nation, I affirm, *had no real exiftence prior to your new laws*. The hufbandmen, without your interference, would have been eternally expofed to all the depredations of an *ariftcratic court*, which could hardly add to its infatiability, but would have maintained it by expedients, fubtle, violent, and always deftructive of public felicity.

Yes, you have done every thing to favour the *people*, *the unfortunate people*, who, feeding the nation, bore alfo all the burdens. You have chaced away thofe unjuft acts, *reduced into the civil code*, which, by the affiftance of time, tyranny had collected and confolidated. Thofe monfters have fled, the creation of the avarice and cruelty of princes, that horrible train of partial and grievous impofts, the *corvées*, the *taille*, the *gabelle*, and the game laws.

The *corvées* demanded the labour of my

children to conſtruct broad ways, on which the chariots of opulence might roll; the *taille** oppreſſed them by its multiplied weight; the *gabelle*† obliged them to pay an exorbitant price for one of the firſt neceſſaries of life, with which the liberal hand of nature ſupplies them as a fifth and ſalutary element; the *game* devoured the harveſt they had ſown, and they were ſent to the *galleys*, if they dared to drive away the birds, or even diſturb their repoſe: for the inſolence of deſpotiſm, when it once gains a footing, has no bounds.

After the reaping of the corn, appeared the *dixme**; then came the rights of *minage*†, and *ghallage*‡, thoſe of *peage*||, and thoſe of *bannalité*§, and when the farmer, after ſo many burdens, went to ſell his produce, the lord of manor had uſurped the *privilege* of expoſing his own firſt to ſale. Laſtly, moſt of my children, ſcattered over the plains, were ſubject to the *voluntary tax* of their lords, to a *perſonal tax*, to the taxes of *watching and guarding*, and to ſervi-

* A ſort of capitation tax. *Tranſlator.*

† The tax on ſalt. *Tranſlator.*

* The Tythe.

† The rights of ſupplying meaſures.

‡ The right of furniſhing market-ſtalls.

|| The tolls or cuſtoms.

§ The obligation to grind at the lord's mill. *Tranſlator.*

tudes,

tudes which involved *property* and *perſon* in ſlavery. In addition to all this, a dreadful lottery, under the name of military ſervice, threw my children into perpetual alarm; it filled their pure and ſenſible minds with the moſt cruel anguiſh, and forced tender mothers to groan and to bewail their fertility. Depotiſm, calculating its outrages, generally from the moſt chimerical ideas, to mark the perſonal ſervitude of *my family*, dragged to battle the huſbandmen, while it exempted the *lackeys* and the *artizans* in towns. The tears of the diſconſolate peaſants flowed in vain, and only redoubled the rigour of the *intendants*, the obdurate executors of theſe violent orders. The countrymen ſinking under the load of deſpair, bade adieu each to the humble cottage he inherited from his anceſtors, and went to loſe their *life* or their *morals* in thoſe armies, which chance, the ignorance, the caprice or the ſelf-love of their leaders, afterwards ſacrificed at will. If they returned not maimed, my dear children returned libertines and diſqualified for rural life. All theſe uſeful hands which deſpots had torn from me, all theſe artleſs hearts which war corrupted, are now, thanks to you, reſtored to me! How ſincerely do I congratulate myſelf, gentlemen, at your having expelled a ſcourge, which three dynaſties of *crowned heads* confirm-

ed more and more. But while ſo many miniſters laboured for the *elevation* and not the *grandeur* of a ſingle man, it was worthy of you to labour for the welfare of the kingdom.

Alas! How great was the barbarity! The *noble* payed not the impoſts like the other citizens, becauſe he had more poſſeſſions to guard and defend; and becauſe he was more opulent, he ſet up abſurd principles which exempted him from contributing to the public charges.

Tax the uncultivated lands, gentlemen; and ſince reaſon enjoys its full energy, tax the villas, the parks, and the encloſures, ſo many excluſive poſſeſſions; above all, tax *the Engliſh garden*, and all thoſe extravagant faſhions which ſpring from the puerility of the pretenders ſtyled *artiſts*, employed in imaging the rocks of the *Alps*, and in repreſenting, with muddy canals, the caſcades of mount Jura; yes, tax theſe futile creations of the *nobility* and of the *financiers*, ſo worthy their fooliſh origin, and which ſwell the pride of their ſtupid proprietors. The opulent ſhould bear the greateſt load of impoſts, for the taſk, or rather the great excellence of legiſlation, is conſtantly to better the condition of the poor.

It is you, auguſt aſſembly, who have boldly removed *the ponderous ages of fanaticiſm, barbarity and ignorance*, to diſcover under theſe hideous and

and rotten maſſes, and to raiſe up *juſtice* and *humanity*, cruſhed indeed, but inſtantly revived, fair in their immortal luſtre, and ſtrong in their majeſtic ſimplicity. You have revealed the *eternal rights* of nations; and the fantaſtic beings which inſenſibility and the ſpirit of domination had created, have quickly diſappeared. Thoſe frightful illuſions, invented by the ſelfiſh deſpotiſm of courts, that execrable balance in which *men's heads* were weighed againſt a *vile metal*; all are vaniſhed.

We may here contemplate and adore the views of Providence. That beneficient guardian invites man continually to improvement; ſhe gives him *underſtanding* to frame laws, and *arms* to exterminate tyrants. By clinging to my *breaſts* he will draw the elements of the moſt perfect civilization, the true ſocial order; for the *beſt exiſtence* of man is to follow cloſely the principles of nature, and to ſquare himſelf with her eternal laws.

But theſe principles belong to me, ſince it was I that built the firſt *civil houſe*; and I, therefore, faſhion the *morals*, I am the ſource of the *domeſtic virtues*; becauſe, ſurrounding man with my uſeful riches, I make the faireſt and moſt proſperous fruits of *morality* to ſpring up, beſide *thoſe* of the earth.

 You

You have well conceived, gentlemen, the basis of the social compact, and, guided by the torch of philosophy, you have recognized that all men were *equal in rights*. Suddenly you have destroyed that chimerical distinction of *ranks*, for with this fatal distinction every thing in the world was appropriated to the *clergy* and the *nobility*; the rest of mankind seemed to be *created* merely for the *throne*, and for an *aristocratic court*, which exalted the idol only to devour the better in its *name*.

Your labours will not be fully known and appreciated till the succeeding generation. Suffer to perish at your feet the murmurs of vice and imposture: you are the scourge of all the abuses which torment *polished nations*; and the men perverted by *factitious arts*, who, for *partial and personal* enjoyments have renounced the *grandeur* of *human nature*, cannot comprehend you.

The hail and thunder which an angry sky discharges upon the earth, were less detrimental to the prosperity of our fields, than those numerous *covers* where the plunderers of the harvest found shelter, and from whence they scattered themselves over the living sources of our existence. The murderous chace had constructed these *strong holds* to conceal and maintain the

numerous

numerous enemies of the poor huſbandman.— They attacked in the ſeed, in the blade, in the ear, in the ſheaf, all the hopes, and all the products of a laborious year. It was unlawful to ſtop the inroads of the hare, the rabbit, the pigeon, the partridge, the pheaſant, the ſtag, the doe, and the boar. How delightfully the ſound ſtrikes my ear! I hear the pealing ſtrokes, which, like the fire of a rampart, mowe them down. They fall; my enemies fall, and the joyful ſhouts, re-echoed from every ſide, announce afar, that the reign of juſtice is come. The deſtroyers fly; but they in vain ſeek the *covers*, which, now opened and cleared away, preſent not a ſingle veſtige; for the expiatory plough muſt purify the ſoil, muſt ſanctify the long-loſt ground, and obliterate, if poſſible, the remembrance of ſuch inveterate, ſuch cruel injuries.

This decree of yours, gentlemen, thus becomes an *act* of *eternal* beneficence, which will operate upon future ages. The deſtruction of the *game*, and of the office of *rangers*, will alone augment the produce of the arable lands nearly 300 millions*, and will almoſt double the amount of the general territorial produce. This

* Upwards of 13 millions, ſterling.

calculation, which makes you ſmile with joy, will not appear *exceſſive*, to thoſe who have had an opportunity of examining the prodigious ravages which *domeſticated animals* committed in copſes, plantations of all kinds, and vine-yards. The haughty rural proprietors will, themſelves, reap the greateſt advantages from this new order of things. They will find their revenues more than doubled, inſtead of enjoying, excluſively, the ſad privilege of killing a few hares or partridges.

Will not this compenſation be infinitely more advantageous to them? Although you had enacted only this ſingle decree, gentlemen, the *national aſſembly* would have deſerved the homage of all my children, and conſequently, of all thoſe who live, and are to live by their labour; for the happy deſtruction of game, in ſpite of princes, who ſtupidly and inhumanly trampled, with their dogs and horſes, upon the ſown fields, will, henceforth, permit the *extenſion of meadows. Cattle* may every where be bred, and conſequently the importation of foreign hides, wool, and tallow, avoided. The marſhes, which at preſent are loſt to every uſeful purpoſe, will, when drained, reſtore to me more than 140 thouſand acres, and will no longer ſpread far around them infection and death. And what implements

implements do my children require, with which to perform ſuch great achievements? A plough-ſhare, a mattock, a bill, a net, a ſheep-ſkin to cover the loins, and a dart to pierce the head of the boar; with theſe inſtruments, the peaſant poſſeſſes the four primitive and neceſſary arts which procure ſubſiſtance for the human race. The vegetable kingdom will be extended, and become of immenſe value, when the genius of man ſhall be duly attentive to it; but alas! the genius of man wandered long in falſe paths before its entry into the road of felicity. In a little time, each perſon, paſſionately fond of his own inheritance, will devote himſelf to cultivate, to embelliſh it, and the unproductive claſſes of ſociety will ſink into diſrepute. All my children will ſoon be convinced, that the indifferent lands are much oftener ſo through the fault of the cultivator, than of nature.

But I muſt ſtill ſigh when I behold, on the one ſide, *property without labour*, and on the other, *labour without property*: it is full time that a renovated people beſtow property upon all thoſe who ſhall claim it by their toil.

Extend your bleſſings, gentlemen; let the right of *paſſage* be aboliſhed, and every perſon be free to *encloſe* his property; enjoin *the diviſion of commons*, that monſtrous part of the Go-

thic

thic edifice conſtructed by *feudality*. Permit the cultivation of *tobacco*; let *bee-hives* be protected from ſeizure. And, would you eſtabliſh the epoch of an univeſal feſtival in the kingdom, declare boldly *the abolition of the rights of aids*. Do directly the contrary of what *deſpotiſm* has done, by the aſſiſtances of its cruel *intendants*, *ſubdelegates*, *commiſſaries*, *and officers of the court*. By this ſingle act you will augment the territorial riches. But, with the ſame blow, deſtroy the *Engliſh gardens*, by *impoſts*, and, I repeat it, be *inexorable* on that head; for if this fatal and abſurd taſte were ſtill to prevail, all France would be converted into *Engliſh gardens*. This rage has done more *harm* to my *ſoil* than three hoſtile armies could have occaſioned.

The *new* code of *beneficence*, of *juſtice*, and of *reaſon*, digeſted by your care, will extend cultivation, and introduce into every part an enlightened practice; becauſe the wretched *routine* of the inhabitants of the country will diſappear with their bondage. Yes, new men, regenerated by liberty, will have *new conceptions*; they will learn to reflect, and to ſeek around them for perfection; they will adopt without difficulty uſeful proceſſes, new experiments, and fitter inſtruments, thoſe inſtruments which have lately given man a third, a fourth, a fifth arm;

theſe

these arms will give a greater ſcope to the art of raiſing food. The art which ſtands pre-eminent, will form the moſt ſerious ſtudy, the principal occupation of man, reſtored to his primitive employment as to his firſt home; for the ſocial virtues depend on the means of ſubſiſtance. Vices and crimes will fly, be aſſured, gentlemen, before the ſources of plenty: every vice ſprings not from *ignorance*, but from *penury*.

From penury! There is no ſoil ungrateful to the ingenious cultivator; for nature ſeconds every good intention, every commendable labour in proportion to the *attempts*. The efforts to procure the ſmalleſt proſperity are never *vain*. Ignorance and indolence alone, will henceforward complain of bad lands. Civilization advances with my darling friends, *Oliver de Serre*, *du Hamel*, *Rozier*, and *Parmentier*. New Triptolemuſes, they have aided legiſlation, by making alimentary treaſures to grow on lands devoted lately to ſterility. By following their inſtructions, man will no longer have to contend with *neceſſity*, as the *ſavage* with the wild beaſts in the deſert; becauſe he will be better ſkilled in cultivating *vegetable nutriments*. Prolific nature has diverſified them for his uſe; within a ſhort ſpace, they have grown with peculiar complaiſance. My beloved philoſophers, atten-

tive to every enquiry on eſculent plants, will, by degrees, deſtroy the race of males and females in a ſtate of celibacy; for, as a politician has well obſerved, *in all places where two beings can live conveniently, the marriage ſtate is readily embraced:* and by attending to the new leſſons of my *darlings*, of my *favourite ſociety*,* whoſe every effort tends to propagate diſcoveries with which it inſtantly gratifies the human race, the *clothing*, and even the *feeding* of *free men*, will ſoon be as certain as the *happy revolution* which ſecures to them their rights. A ſolid and country diet will contribute to the vigor and the independant character of thoſe who ought now to *handle equally the ſword and the plough-ſhare.* The *feſtivals* of corruption will be abandoned; and on every ſide will be extended the cultivation of thoſe *good and new roots* which promiſe ſuch immenſe utility.

May I unboſom to you, Gentlemen, one of my keeneſt diſquiets? My good, my faithful companion, the ox, inſeparable from Ceres of yore, and deſtined by nature to the yoke, labours not my furrows as formerly. His pace was ſlow and heavy, I grant; yet I lament that he has given place to the *plough-horſe*, though the

* That of agriculture.

poetical

poetical Buffon has ſaid, that the latter is the *nobleſt conqueſt which man has made.* I look upon the horſe as the eater of man's daily bread; this proud animal has uſurped my wideſt domains; his impolitic and vaſt conſumption makes havoc on all ſides upon corn and the leguminous productions. The conſumption of a horſe requires near ſix acres of ground; he deſtroys, in oats and hay, the half of my crops. The brute occupies more of my territory than man: yes, the paltrieſt jade is more plentifully fed than my moſt aſſiduous laborer. But my ox is never attacked by any of the diſtempers to which the horſe is ſubject; he makes more dung, and it is of a better quality.

If anciently the hog was ſacrificed to the yellow Ceres, on account of the waſte it committed among the fruits of the earth, I do not heſitate to name the horſe as my moſt formidable adverſary; and this reproach has become the more founded ſince he has been employed in the carnage of war. What this animal coſts the human ſpecies really exceeds calculation. My ox is my true companion: even cows are proper for tilling light ground; they may be coupled to the yoke, and made to dreſs, at leaſt, the fields of rye, of peaſe, and of barley, till they be trained to more uſeful labor.

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There is another ſubject of complaint and grief which I cannot conceal from you, Gentlemen: the vine, which has been forced in grounds unſuitable to it, provokes nature, who avenges her rights by giving a bad and unwholeſome wine. The ſoil which has been croſſed yields only the ſhadow of that liquor; baſtard vines diſgrace the countries which they cover. Theſe countries have loſt the local benefits of nature; and theſe vineyards, expoſed to ungenial winds, and deprived of the vivifying aſpect of the ſun, produce a pernicious wine, which may be termed the poiſon of the national ſtrength: this is a terrible ſcourge to the country; the rotten grape, which has poſſeſſed itſelf of excellent corn-lands, flows into taverns, by far too numerous, and foments boiſterous paſſions and brutal orgies. The landlord, in addition, adulterates the wretched liquor, and increaſes its treacherous abundance. The village-folks become inflamed with an intoxication, which murders the precious days of the week, and introduces ſtrife into their huts. It is this accurſed liquor that renders half the village beggars, enlarges the hoſpitals, and transforms the houſes where pledges are received into a monſtrous frippery. Oh! aſſiſt me, legiſlators, to ſave the ſtate, to ſave populating families from the

the *devaſtation of wine*, from the commerce of bad wine, which the old and cruel government favored ſo much, only to augment the revenue.

Require not wine but from the ſoil which nature deſtines to produce it. What friendly hand will tear up the languiſhing vines from the innumerable banks expoſed to the north? They only ruin the vine-dreſſer, always abuſed and always poor, notwithſtanding his reiterated ſtruggles. Who will reſtore theſe banks, theſe plains, to the innocent and nouriſhing grain which is preſerved as a preſent never poiſoned with remorſe? The plough, the plough! How many thouſand acres allotted to unprofitable and ſteril wines may be brought again to yield abundant crops; then will thoſe inveterate evils diſappear, which falſe agricultural plans have occaſioned. He who ſhall in preference drive the *ox* which *labors*, will more eaſily obtain the *horſe* which *carries*, and the *ſheep* which *clothes*, and, as a neceſſary conſequence, *the hen for the ruſtic pot*. Laſtly, a *gardener* with his ſpade will always be dearer and more precious to me than a *vine-dreſſer*; and I ſwear it by my *artificial* meadows.

Your laws, Gentlemen, and the labours of my good and uſeful children, begin already to draw into the country a multitude of people hitherto

therto wandering in towns, perplexed, unoccupied, or engaged about glittering trifles. They will perceive ſtill better the void, when the ſmall *lots of territorial property* ſhall have introduced a mild emulation for the eaſy labors, which ſhall be as glorious as profitable. They will feel that the luxury of cities always leaves at the bottom of the heart deſires unſatisfied, and a thirſt which deceives. Man acted capriciouſly when he deſerted me and my peaceful dwellings, to loſe himſelf in the falſe charms of the fantaſtic arts to run after ſpectacles. He will never behold one fairer than mine; never will he taſte more exalted joys than, when, in the country, in a reſidence of peace, enlivened by a brilliant ſun, he ſhall obtain, with a few inſtructions, and a very ſmall ſtock, his food and his happineſs: then he will have a livelier ſentiment of his independance; and, to ſum up all, he will not really embrace civil and political liberty, till he ſhall have found, in himſelf, and by the labour of his own hands, the reſources of his ſubſiſtance and of his repoſe.

Small poſſeſſions are my delight, my ſtrength, and my glory: it is here that the vegetable kingdom flouriſhes, and becomes immenſely rich; it is here that a multitude of little experiments are made which add to my treaſures;

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it is here that each perſon, fond of his inheritance, is forward to improve and embelliſh it; and it is here that indifferent lands, which are moſt frequently ſo through the fault of the cultivator, evince that the genius of man can change and transform nature at its will. In the fields of the yeomanry, we ſhall never ſee the pernicious bramble, briſtling the hardened ſoil, ſtrike root under the limeſtone rock, and ſupply every where a cover for the rabbit, which devours all the neighbouring vegetation. We ſhall ſoon behold the difference between land cultivated for one's ſelf, and land cultivated for others.

What pride can be more honeſt than to be able to ſay every day; *I have created the ornaments of my table, the food of my family, and the tranquillity of my roof?* He who thinks and acts thus, is never the ſlave of the powerful, the accomplice of their licentiouſneſs, nor the hired aſſaſſin of his brethren: he is greater than all the *laced and embroidered valets of courts.* He has obeyed the admirable leſſon of Horace, *mens conſcia recti in corpore ſano.* If he has *parchments*, he may burn them, and powerful *with me*, and *through me*, may renounce for ever all thoſe excluſive *privileges*, the remains of barbarity, an ancient chaos, a barren glory, not worth

the free clearing of lands, that is, the liberty *granted to property as well as to men*, and which, by the natural concord of all the ſocial laws, is about to produce many advantages hitherto unknown. *Servitude*, the mother of indolence, and daughter of *tyranny*, oppoſed it; but for ſuch great and important innovations, ought we not to rid ourſelves of a few genealogical chimeras and worm-eaten papers?

Thus, your decrees, Gentlemen, are about to create a new and precious poſterity of induſtrious cultivators, ſearchers, and gentle violators of the chaſte ſanctuary of nature. Theſe will come forward in place of thoſe degraded and wretched beings who *ſcraped* continually on *paper*, on *cloth*, on *ſtone*, or on the *gates* of the great; who lived by *barren imitations* of nature, inſtead of fertilizing her; who, working upon *ſurfaces* heaped up *coloured prints* or *cameos*; who, finally, knew how to *produce* nothing, wearing out a whole generation without having attempted the vegetation of a ſingle plant. Yes! all the pitiful *artiſts* who *chiſled*, who *emboſſed* metals, who *gilded cielings*, who *ſet diamonds*, this army of workmen, in the pay of the diſdainful grandees, will be employed to better purpoſe: they will henceforth *ſcrape* the *earth*, and it will reward more profitably their labours than did

marble,

marble, cloth, metal, or *rags reduced to paſte*. They will no longer be the *ſubjects of luxury*; they will be my noble companions: to *procure food*, they will not wait till a perſon deſires a *ſnuff-box* gilt with *three colours*, or the *portrait* of a *proſtitute*, or the boudoir of his *laſciviouſneſs*. The *artiſt*, till now wretched, metamorphoſed into a *cultivator*, will be able to reply to him who would purchaſe his ſervice in *crimes* or *meanneſs*; *retire to your palace with your inauſpicious projects, or your childiſh plans, for I have the roots of life*. Already, at the voice of liberty, a multitude of workmen have deſerted the *ſhops* of *luxury*, and their arms, employed more uſefully, have been reſtored to nobler labours, to their primitive deſtination.

Soon will the ſplendor of France accompany the eaſe of my new family, and of that which you ſhall have given me; and the gold which was waſted on whimſical, ridiculous, uſeleſs, ſteril, and unreaſonable works, will be appropriated to a new and productive labor, carried throughout my extended fields, through the whole of my domains, of thoſe domains which are deſtined to nouriſh the real ſtrength of the empire; an immenſe territory, which all our kings have, in their turn, blaſted, by covering it with *privileges*, with abſurd and barbarous

laws, with diſtinctions calculated to ruin the common weal; monſtrous abuſes, which you have at length deſtroyed, and ſacrificed on the altar of your country.

I ſhall no more, I hope, ſee a wan and ſickly race of youths, inſtead of the bloom and vigor that ſhould accompany that period of life; no more witneſs the faintneſs of watching and faſting, the diſtreſſes of languor, and the ſighs of beggary; no more behold the unfortunate wretch, on whom nature has beſtowed hands, tap at the barred door, and vainly crave a bit of bread. Henceforward, attached to a maternal earth, which will, from her boſom, ſupply his wants, he will learn that the common mother has never failed to recompenſe the ſlighteſt labor, and that the ſoil moſt deſpaired of may be cultivated, when managed with ſome activity and ſome intelligence; for it now belongs to idleneſs or ignorance to ſay, *this land is good for nothing*. Let the lazy indulge their ſloth; they can never injure the man who applies, under the canopy of heaven, to a labor of an aſſured utility.

Rural attentions, verdant meads, trees planted, engrafted, and pruned by our hands; ſeed-time, harveſt, vintage; the garden, the farm-yard: no, never will the pompous ſpectacles of cities

fill

fill up all the days of the year like thefe labors by which the quickened earth fmiles on its mafter, and gratifies him by a difplay of the multiplied productions, which, flattering his underftanding, and a genuine pride, reward abundantly his annual toils. If, in the infancy of the world, at the fight of *acorns* and *beech-mafts*, the joy of man broke forth in fongs of gladnefs, and in dances round the *oaks* and the *beeches*; behold now fruits of every kind, which, having changed their flavour, and almoft their form, ftrive, with emulation, to obtain the honour of paffing through his hands. Hear the lowing of the herds, the matin fong of the cock, the clucking of the hen, the cooing of the pigeon; this rural concert never tires, it blends itfelf with the filence of nature, it beftows life and motion on the landfcape; and, with redoubled pleafure, we behold the meadow enamelled with flowers, the yellow ears of corn, and the tree fwelling and loaded with fruit.

The voice of my *good rectors*, of my friends, and beft fupporters, that voice, which among you has *already done me fo much good*, will complete the deftruction of thofe fuperftitious notions which ftill prevail: it will overcome the feduction of routine; will filence rooted prejudices, derived from ignorance; will enforce a convic-

tion that nothing *arifes from chance*, or *in confequence of an idle charm*; and will teach all to recognize, in the fmalleft, as well as in the greateft things, the folemn laws of the Creator, who has made the abundance and quality of the crops to depend wholly on the feafons, the local fituation, and the daily attention of man. This inftructive voice, founded on new reflection, and moreover confirmed by experience, will convince all my children that the ills which afflict their fields proceed only from their errors and their obftinacy; in fhort, that the *loffes* which they fuffer all fpring from their *voluntary* blindnefs.

Our morals will regenerate together with the laws, becaufe hufbandmen perceive the value of the focial virtues. They do more, they practife them; they feek not to corrupt, and are themfelves not eafily corrupted: œconomy and eafy circumftances banifh low and vile fentiments, and all the venal difpofitions which augment the herd of flaves. Among them we never fee *people* who betray the intereft of their native land, nor does the *venal pen* juftify acts againft the nation, nor do we meet with thofe men of blood, who, like *dogs*, are let loofe to worry each other.

My good rectors are not that privileged body, lazy

lazy and turbulent, who, with ſcandalous manners, and inſatiable avidity, caballed at the court, and did ſo much harm to *religion*, their *country*, and the *renown* of kings. Alas! theſe haughty prelates * would have murdered even Chriſtian morality, had not my friends, *the rectors*, laboured ſtrenuouſly to edify, to counſel, and comfort my children.

The French had a *country*, you have given them, Gentlemen, a *home*; all now renew their exiſtence, and hail each other children of the ſame family. Alas! my poor children, lately degraded by ſervitude, and hardly conſcious of the title of man, imagined themſelves placed in the ſtate merely to wear the eternal yoke of the great. You have awakened them to the ſentiment of liberty which they now inherit: a cruel *collector*, a ferocious or ſenſeleſs *lord*, an arrogant *man of privilege* cannot, for a moment, deprive them of property, ſecurity, or liberty. Miniſters will no longer dare to think and aſſert, that, to attach them to rural labor, it is requiſite to ſnatch from them all comfort, in order that they may be conſtrained by wretchedneſs to continue their rough and daily toils: this

* They adored the golden calf, and murmured againſt Moſes when he reduced it to powder.

blaſphemy will never more eſcape from the mouths of pretended *ſtateſmen.*

The law which aboliſhes a *bad government* is hurtful to my *enemies*, becauſe it defeats their pride and avarice; but the law of nature is plainly that of God: this law, which God has ſent in pity to our *long ſufferings*, will find as many defenders as ſuch a noble cauſe deſerves.

Perſevere, Gentlemen, in ſpite of the calumnies of thoſe whoſe inveterate oppreſſions you have attacked, and who will ſoon vaniſh from the earth. Perſevere, in ſpite of the rage of wicked men, who, living by iniquities or abſurdities, wiſhed to continue them till the termination of their uſeleſs career. Public intelligences have diſplayed their luſtre; nature has lifted up her voice, the moral univerſe is rouſed, and old abominations have appeared in their true colours. Ruffians could not *murder human reaſon*; they could not annihilate the holy majeſty of nature. They regarded as a *dream* its laws, its power, its influence; they took the unſuſpecting ſlumber of a good nation for abſolute inſignificance. But this *good nation* has demanded the performance of the ſocial compact, for it is eſſentially founded on common utility and reciprocal relation. There could be no aſſociation of wills, but for the advantage of each individual.

individual. The unanimity of virtue muſt finally eſtabliſh a government worthy of the human race.

What can now ſtop, Gentlemen, the ſalutary and invincible tendency of nature, the pleaſing idea of union, this glorious movement of concord, of fraternity, of mutual protection; this progreſs of your holy laws which will be immortal, becauſe you have diſplayed to each man the land, his induſtry, his courage, his dignity, his ſuſceptibility of improvement, nature, and God: in ſight of theſe great *baſes* will vaniſh all the phantoms, the untoward accidents in the vaſt plan of ſocial harmony.

The earth belongs to me, for without me it could not exiſt. You have perceived this important truth, Gentlemen, and you have received your meet reward. Your laws are become great, weighty, ſolemn, and, laſtly, are calculated for the times; your laws will be bleſſed, protected, and maintained by the preſent generation, and by generations to come. If the Eternal reigneth, and, in his reſiſtleſs uncontroulable ſovereignty, regardeth *all men as equals*, you have adopted his law, his living, inviolable, and ſacred law: and I, who feed the *monarch* and the *ſhepherd*, aſſure you that you *have acted wiſely*, and that

you

you have adhered to the *true principle* on which repofes the order of the univerfe.

On the day, when, furrounded by the mercenary fatellites of defpotifm, you braved their fwords, what was it that infpired this tranquil courage? It was becaufe you viewed the hopes of *twenty five millions* of men, and, warmed with this holy vifion, you obtained the liberty of my children by an heroic oath. On that day, you preferved them both from the return of *the feudal fyftem* of ancient oppreffions, and of all the *calamities* which the *privileged orders* commanded and authorized. I fwear in the name of all my labourers, that they fhall vifit this *tennis-play* by which France was completely faved; by which the enemies of the conftitution, and of hufbandmen, were difconcerted in their infernal projects, fo worthy their character; and where the friendly genius of the human race watched over the deftiny of the French empire.

Yes, I repeat it, all my children will vifit annually this *tennis-play*, which will inform every generation that real force confifts not in the murderous inftruments which vomit death, but in the facred character of *the law*, in courage, and in the tranquil firmnefs of patriotifm. *Cannons, cafes*

of

of bullets, two millions of *cartouches*, a marſhal *ſupreme executioner*, twenty-ſeven *general officers*, choſen *ſatellites*, well paid *domeſtic aſſaſſins*, and *foreign exterminators*, brought to the gates of the capital its devaſtation, its pillage forming a part of the moſt *atrocious canſpiracy* that hiſtory will record. This noble city of enlightened Europe, Paris, ſacked! The univerſe would have worn weeds of mourning through countleſs ages.— Conſiderable quantities of corn thrown into the river, to join famine to carnage. Laſtly, all the *concealed treaſons*, all the *ſanguinary projects*, which rival, or rather ſurpaſs thoſe of *St. Bartholomew*: all theſe were inſufficient to *deſtroy* a nation, notwithſtanding the fooliſh and abominable hopes entertained by deſpotiſm combined with ariſtocracy. And why had they dared to entertain it? Thereby to preſerve and conceal from the eyes of all, the famous *red book*, whoſe *colour* was the too faithful *emblem* of the blood with which it was daily *bathed*.— Immortal honour to the intrepid bravery of the Pariſians who repelled deſpotiſm! Since that day the nation has had a *king*, and no longer a *maſter*. The moſt glorious of conſtitutions will honour the courage of the worthieſt of nations. What a lovely movement in the nature of things, and in the human mind!

And while this *red book*, which was ſo obſtinately witheld from view, devoured the ſtate, it was I, I can affirm it, who *inceſſantly* ſupplied freſh and freſh productions to feed the wretch, ſtript of his ſhilling, his laſt ſhilling dropt into *the tub of the Danaides*. I ſtrove to repair every diſaſter; I haſtened to comfort my children, by perpetuating under their eyes the renovating wonders of the *Omnipotent*.

Alas! gentlemen, have I not groaned with them ſo long, as to entitle my complaints to be heard? Yes, it is the *coalition* of *ariſtocrats*, which, for theſe five and twenty years, has inflicted on me the harſheſt, and moſt unexpected blows; and when, by an *infernal compact*, theſe monſters, in a human form, ſpread famine in France, it was not my labourers that profited by the *dearneſs* of grain, but the engroſſers, and the other *titled deſtroyers*. Their criminal profit bowed down with languor and dejection the poor man who had only his hands. The villainouſly *ariſtocratic* government of 1787 (I can give it no milder appellation) has ruined my children, and diſgraced humanity, and this to enrich, not *commercial companies*, but a few *cluſters of financiers*, with whom the worthleſs courtiers ſhared the *murderous* gains. Alas! the recollection is too bitter! *Dearth* and its innumerable

able calamities have always followed or accompanied the ſpeculations of the *old government.*

It was time that the fabric ſhould be overturned *from the foundation* ; Providence lent *her aid.* It will one day be ſaid, that never a nation ſo long, ſo cruelly *oppreſſed*, ſo baſely *betrayed*, ſo abominably *threatened*, was equally prudent in its force, or more moderate in its vengeance.— Three hundred thouſand armed men forgot that their *deſtruction* was *ſworn*, they pardoned with full power to puniſh. My good people! Your ferocious enemies were *ſurprized*, and yet not *touched*; but ever be generous. I ſtop ſhort; my mild and calm occupations render *certain images* too painful.

Ancient as the univerſe, I waited patiently till the *rights* which I hold from *God* and *nature*, ſhould be reſpected, that I might ceaſe to be an oppreſſed and debaſed ſlave. Already vigour and courage revive with the ſentiment of liberty; and quickly ſhall I give to the moſt covetuous, the ſecret of *converting earth into gold*; I ſhall render France *formidable* to the other powers, which have neither the ſame *poſition*, nor a ſimilar *ſoil*; I ſhall invite the foreigner to ſettle in France: for as the *crown* and the *plough* evidently gain the moſt by the *conſtitu-*

tion,

tion, they form now, or will form, the indiſſoluble band of the political *faſcis*.

If the nation, Gentlemen, was ſaved by your intrepid firmneſs, the bleſſings of future generations will recompence your heroic labours.—At your feet let every impotent and deſpiſed clamour expire. A great nation is never deceived. Receive here the teſtimony of my gratitude, the homage and thanks of the tendereſt mother, who knows what you have done for the moſt numerous claſs of unfortunate men, for the uſeful and laborious claſs which fertilizes and embelliſhes the globe. The human race is poor; it has nothing to beſtow, and you have turned your views towards it. But it ſpeaks with my mouth, it bleſſes you, it will never forget *your names*; the names of the *firm renovators of France* will be conſecrated for ever.—The poor human race which lives with me, which lives by me, and which I cannot forſake, preſents to you its genuine, its feeling, its eternal love; and for me, I expect only two or three *legiſlatures*, like yours, to change France into a real paradiſe on earth.

Thus atteſts your tender and even grateful mother,

AGRICULTURE.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE ON PHILIP II.

PHILIP II. is consumed to ashes; two centuries have already elapsed; and his fame must now be tried before the tribunal of ages. I purpose to delineate his terrible and superstitious despotism, to collect the features of that cruel physiognomy, which makes us shudder at their recital; I wish to inspire others with that indignation which I myself feel. Conscience dictates the conduct of the writer; and the vulgar, insensible to the great calamities which have oppressed humanity, or retaining too faint remembrance of them, cannot imagine what moves us to strike in their tombs those dreadful enemies of mankind.

The avenging pen of the writer should blast the wicked kings; for thus are the good honoured. All will pass in their turn under the faithful graver, which shall proclaim to posterity their crimes, or their commendable qualities. The smallest traits of their character will be brought to full light; and whatever veil may now conceal them, they will be delivered over to the judgment of generations to come.

Since the days of Tiberius, never was a more inflexible, or more cruel tyrant seated on a throne;

throne; it was a lake of blood (the picture is not overcharged) on which he floated the vessel of the Romish church. Leagued with the inquisition, he protected its fury in Flanders, and in Spain, and wished to extend its horrid powers to America. Cruel by character and by principle, never did clemency and piety find a way to his heart. He associated himself to two men of dispositions similar to his own; Cardinal Granvelle and the Duke of Alva: he entrusted to them his whole authority, because these ministers were stern and implacable, like himself.

He wished to join to his power, already so terrible, a religious government, because it holds men in complete subjection. As God rules the univese, religious despotism pretends to enthral the political world: every rebel is a heretic, and every heretic is treated like a rebel. The infidel is a traitor to the throne. Religious monarchy is, therefore, most dangerous of all; and this it was which Philip II. was desirous to establish*. No despotism on earth is loftier, or more

* By a sentence of the inquisition in Spain, all the people of the Low Countries were declared apostates, and consequently guilty of high treason. The counts Egmont and Horn were executed. The former had obtained the victories of St. Quentin, and of Gravelines. Phillip II. aspiring to the crown of Portugal, prevented the Cardinal Henry, grand uncle of the deceased king, from marrying;

more ruinous. Befides, this monftrous form of government lays claim to peculiar wifdom and virtue.

For fome centuries, the ecclefiaftical government had adopted, as its model, the ancient form of the Roman empire. Thefe ideas, fupported by all the fhow and parade of religion, had externally the moft commanding afpect; they totally fubdued men's minds, and eftablifhed an uniformity of worfhip. There was but one ftep to fupreme law. Many princes, therefore, wifhed to unite the ftate and church, that, by this expedient, they might enjoy the moft extenfive power. Philip II, furpaffing in pride his predeceffors and cotemporaries, admitted the pope's infallibility, only to arrogate in his turn the fame prorogative, and to command with the crofs as well as with the fword. When his intereft was concerned, none durft difpute or oppofe him: if he took the *crucifix* in his hand, the hardieft fhook with fear. The moft intolerant pontiff fpoke by the mouth of the moft unfeeling monarch.

ing; and managed matters fo well at the court of Rome, that the difpenfation never came. After the death of the cardinal, Philip II. took poffeffion of that crown without ftriking a blow. This obftinate perfecutor of confciences, renewed the Roman profcriptions, and fet a price on illuftrious heads.

Thence arofe a fpirit of perfecution, which changed into political fanaticifm. It at once feized and corrupted every part of the government, which was reduced to the cruel neceffity of fubjecting all, and facrificing all to religious ideas. Its chief aim was to drive away every man who thought for himfelf, and to blaft and load with fufpicions whoever breathed the fpirit of enquiry. How happens it that fo many evils have flowed from a religion, whofe principle is univerfal charity!

This fhameful defpotifm corrupted every branch of the legiflation, and rendered it at once atrocious and prying. The religious forms, like a troublefome etiquette, by their perpetual reftraints bred hypocrify the fource of fo many vices: the cruelleft and moft unreafonable prejudices augmented, in an inverfe ratio to the decline of knowledge and liberty. Such was the deplorable lot of Spain; fanaticifm reared its ftructures, without moleftation, in the vaft plains of ignorance; the people were degraded to brutes. Yet authority gained not the afcendancy which it expected: men, under this double yoke, commonly pafs from a blind fubmiffion to a difobedience equally fhort-fighted. Philip III. was obliged to declare the united provinces free and independent: he bound him-

felf

ſelf not to diſturb their commerce in India or America.

The monarch whom I pourtray, was king of Spain, of the Two Sicilies, of the Low Countries; maſter of Tunis, of Oran, of the Canaries, and of ſome of the Cape de Verd iſlands; of the Phillippines, of the iſles of Sonda, and of a part of the Moluccas; of the empires of Mexico and of Peru, of New Spain, of Chili, and of almoſt all the iſlands between the continents of Europe and America. God of the univerſe, what an immenſe power was accumulated in the hands of one man, who deſerved not the name!

Every thing conſpired to raiſe this monarch above all thoſe to whom heaven has committed the government of the earth. He might have directed his power to true glory; but of this he had not the leaſt conception. During the ſpace of the forty-two years during which he plotted in his cabinet the enſlaving of Europe, he gave not a ſingle day to the felicity of the world.—Always crafty, always cruel, always ſuperſtitious, he never let ſlip any occaſion of exerciſing a vexatious ſeverity, or a barbarous puniſhment.

He meditated the conqueſt of England, as if he held in abhorrence whatever was allied to freedom. Had not Drake burnt an hundred of his veſſels in the port of Cadiz, had not a tem-

peſt diſperſed the formidable armament, ſtyled the *invincible armada*, that precious republic would have been effaced from the earth *.

What would his power have been, if, already maſter of a part of Europe by inheritance, he had joined England, of which he had been king, to his own dominions? Elizabeth muſt have ſunk under the formidable power of Spain. But fortunately, this extended monarchy was weakened, notwithſtanding its great poſſeſſions, by the want of union among its different parts.—Conqueſt had ſeparated the Catalonians, the Arragoneſe, the Portugueſe, the Neapolitans, and the Flemings; the favours of the court were reſerved for the inhabitants of Madrid; and the miniſter Olivarez juſtly obſerved, that the vaſt maſs of Spaniſh provinces was only a fantaſtic body, held together in appearance, but not in reality. Thus the greatneſs of this na-

* This fleet was compoſed of an hundred and thirty veſſels, mounting two thouſand two hundred and ninety-four pieces of cannon, and equipped with nine thouſand five hundred and fifty ſailors, and thirty-three thouſand eight hundred ſoldiers: two or three armies were ready to embark on the ſhorteſt notice. The deſtruction of this fleet was the epoch of the decline of Philip. He no longer wore that terrible majeſty which inſpired horror and admiration; all his projects became confined; and he ſeemed to cheriſh only one object, the extinction of the Calviniſtic party in France. He drained the mines of the New World; but his riches were inſufficient.

tion oppoſed the vivifying principle, which, in the order of polity, forms the organization of ſtates. And of what in reality conſiſts this multitude of ſubjects, who muſt be protected and defended, and who become uſeleſs to the confederacy, when they can no longer impart their force or induſtry to the general intereſt? They may be compared to thoſe ſhips which, by their prodigious bulk, are unfit to navigate the ocean, and which are laid up in the harbours as objects of curioſity or oſtentation.

The mines of America ſeemed to enſure to Philip great riches, and yet his finances were often exhauſted. He borrowed of the republic of Genoa, he demanded from the court of Rome certain grants of the eccleſiaſtical revenues, and, what is ſcarcely credible, at the ſiege of Amiens, his troops revolted for want of pay.

What exertions did not Philip II. make to depreſs Henry IV.? What crafty efforts did he leave unattempted to prevent his reconciliation with the Holy See? As brother-in-law of the three lateſt monarchs, his view was to obtain the crown for his daughter Iſabella, the neice of France.

He was treated with little ceremony in France. Judged while alive, he was compared to Pharaoh, and was ſpoken of in theſe terms: *This*

old Satrap, ſtained with the blood of his ſon and his wife, wiſhes, like another Xerxes, to cover the ſea with his ſhips; but they have been daſhed by heaven upon the rocks of Scotland and Ireland. This old king, already doating, and with one foot in the grave, whoſe ſtates are all convulſed, and wait only the hour of his death to ſhake off the yoke.—His empire is like an inlaid ſideboard, compoſed of pieces brought together, but which will fall aſunder.

Notwithſtanding theſe invectives, which hatred ſo profuſely diſcharged, the cabinet of Philip II. was conſtantly an object of terror. Maſter of the treaſures of America and of Aſia, he moved Europe at will; and, on every occaſion, obtained a preponderance. He fancied himſelf ſo ſure of his projects, that he ſaid, openly; *my good city of Paris, my good city of Orleans.* If he had availed himſelf of his victory obtained at St. Quentin, he might have overturned the monarchy: but, in the hiſtory of battles, we may remark, that the conqueror, tired or aſtoniſhed at his ſucceſs, has hardly ever the addreſs to purſue his fortune.

The houſe of Auſtria diſcovered a fixed ambition, and a ſpirit of haughty domination; but it loſt, in negociations and intrigues, the time which it ſhould have employed in fighting and con-

conquering. Philip II. might have ruined France; but his political conduct ruined only the league; he had not the courage of an Edward, or of a Charles V. The conqueſt of Portugal, if it may deſerve that name, was the only acquiſition which the Spaniſh monarchy made during the reign of Philip II. It would have grown formidable, but for that multiplicity of affairs which inceſſantly led it to mingle religious fanaticiſm with the buſineſs of the empire. Finally, this ſplenetic and miſchievous monarch did ſo much injury to France, as to excite a national antipathy againſt Spain, and againſt whatever bore the Spaniſh name. This reſentment long ſubſiſted in our ſouthern provinces, where I have ſtill ſeen traces of it, and where mere tradition had perpetuated the memory of public calamities. The pretenſions of Spain, almoſt all founded on an inſupportable and arrogant vanity, juſtly offended the national pride; ſince the precedence which Spain every where affected became troubleſome and ridiculous.

Charles V. had exhibited to the world an extraordinary ſpectacle, in abandoning all at once the project of univerſal monarchy, in reſigning his vaſt ſtates, and in abdicating the crown in favour of his ſon whom he did not love. It

was a very remarkable event when this powerful monarch laid down his royal, military, and political functions, to ſing pſalms, and to perform the rigid taſks of the cloiſter.* What a thorough diſguſt muſt he have imbibed at thoſe great occupations which elevate, warm, and faſcinate the ſoul, that could induce him to adopt a mode of life which wears ſo few charms to other mortals?

This ambitious man relinquiſhed the ſupreme power with every outward appearance of indifference. He concluded by placing himſelf publicly in his coffin, and cauſing the funeral ſervice to be chanted, as if he had been no more. Yet, at theſe pretended obſequies, he wanted that open and intrepid voice which ſhould loudly publiſh the truth; not that which conſiſts in ſcandal or trifles, but that truth which inſtructs the preſent and the future, by revealing to the world the errors or political crimes of ſovereigns, and by denouncing their fatal blunders; that truth, in ſhort, which ſhould exhibit, in the moſt glaring colours, the rich ruffians who wear a ſceptre and a crown, the princes who

* He repeated maxims which it had been better for him to have acted up to. *Men of quality*, he uſed to ſay, *plunder me, while men of letters inſtruct me, and merchants enrich me.*

allot

allot no treaſure to the melioration of their own vaſt domains, but ſquander it in devaſtating thoſe of others.

Charles V. always acted contrarily to what he ſwore or promiſed; for duplicity was the groundwork of his character. Of this aſtoniſhing abdication the real motive is ſtill unknown; but after having acted the farce of the coffin, he quickly repented. Scarcely was Philip II. recognized in the kingdom, than Charles V. was deſpiſed. Unknown by his former ſubjects, he lived amidſt them as in a foreign country. The courtiers ſeeing that there was nothing to gain, paid him no more viſits. He had reſerved a certain ſum to reward his ſervants: of this the ungrateful Philip II. delayed the payment. The old maſter of ſo many kingdoms had no money, and walked in a ſolitary cloiſter, with a breviary in his hand. Every Friday during lent he inflicted diſcipline upon himſelf, in company with his fellow monks. How ſtrange a ſpectacle did this emperor afford to the world!

Yet the act of his abdication had been ſolemn and even affecting. He affectionately embraced his ſon, and expreſſed himſelf thus: *You can repay my tenderneſs only by laboring for the happineſs of your ſubjects; may you have children*

who

who ſhall ſome day engage you to do for one of them what I now do for you!

Was the ſoul of Charles really ſuperior to a throne, or was this merely the effect of a tranſient diſguſt? Hiſtorians have indulged many conjectures, few of them ſatisfactory. No perſon before him had conceived the idea of aſſiſting at his own obſequies. He caught cold in his leaden coffin, while funeral hymns were chanted, and died the ſame year, in conſequence of this indiſpoſition.

Charles V. had been intolerant; that ſpirit of perſecution which wars againſt natural intelligences, had rendered his diſpoſition fatal to the univerſe. Trying in his retreat to make two clocks perfectly agree, he could not ſucceed, and this confeſſion was extorted from him: *How then is it poſſible that two men can have the ſame creed?* There are three points of authority, ſays a modern author, which God has never delegated to man; the right of the diſpoſal of conſciences, the right of forſeeing future events, and the right of creating ſomething out of nothing.

Philip II. in his domeſtic pride, inheriting theſe falſe ideas, wiſhed to ſubject men to the uniformity of his belief. Such was the ground

of

of his character, and the unſhaken baſis of his actions. Scarcely was he ſeated on the throne, when he had the chaplain and confeſſor of Charles V. his father, burned in effigy; and he was within an ace of blaſting the memory of that emperor, by declaring him a heretic. Did this ſtrange ſuperſtition reſide in his heart, or in the Spaniſh character?

The powerful Charles V. had wiſhed to accompliſh the deſigns of Maximilian and Ferdinand, and to complete that ſplendid ſucceſs which ſhould embrace all Europe; but his ambition, too unbounded, was not ſupported by a genius ſufficiently martial. He did not profit by his long proſperity*; his wars were too abrupt; he ruined the fortune which he inherited, by committing the political blunder of

* The ſucceſs of his arms were nevertheleſs extraordinary. Fortune gave him two empires in the New World; he obtained, by his generals, forty glorious victories; he concluded advantageouſly ſeventy wars, ſilenced the dangerous revolts in Germany, ruined the league of *Smalcalde*, and twice obliged Soliman to raiſe the ſiege of Vienna, inveſted by three hundred thouſand Turks; he purſued the pirates on all the ſeas which waſhed his ſtates; he defied, in his firſt voyage to Africa, the famous Barbaroſſa, whoſe army conſiſted of ſixteen thouſand horſe, and two hundred thouſand foot. He owed a part of his conqueſts to his promptneſs; ſince he often poſted from one extremity of a kingdom to the other, to quell the beginning of a ſedition. The revolts in Germany were what he moſt dreaded, and was moſt forward to appeaſe.

regarding

regarding the ſubjection of the empire as the firſt ſtep that would lead him to univerſal monarchy. This error divided his power; and his precipitation to have his brother elected king of the Romans, was, in the iſſue, perhaps, the principal cauſe of the ſalvation of Europe. The empire of Germany was ſubjected to a lighter yoke.

Fortunately Charles V. could not diſpoſe of the empire as of his hereditary ſtates. He had left all his power in the hands of his ſon; and already repented his having procured for his brother the title of king of the Romans, after trying, by the moſt inſiduous offers, to induce him to renounce it. He ſtrove to gain over a Diet; but the Germanic body, ever watchful of its liberty, dreaded an over powerful chief, who might have become dangerous. Charles V. unable to ſubdue the oppoſition of his brother, was obliged reluctantly to leave the empire to Ferdinand.

The houſe of Auſtria was then on the point of invading Europe. Richelieu foreſaw the extent of the impending danger; and in this view he may be regarded as the benefactor of many European nations. Univerſal monarchy was the dream of Philip II. as it had been of Charles V. but the ſituation of the ſtates of the

latter

latter was much more favourable to his designs. The house of Austria was then in the zenith of its grandeur, in the summit of its power: its old subjects were docile and inured to war; the Spaniards were enriched by the treasures of the New World; the Low Countries threatened equally France and the empire; and religion, fostering violent contentions, supplied him by turns with the pretexts of inflaming states, of dividing princes, or of uniting them.

The Spanish monarchy lost much of its credit under Philip II. because he exhausted his country to preserve the possessions of the house of Burgundy, and held not in play that general and simple spring, which, in the reign of his father, had given the same motion to all this mighty force. The policy of Philip II. was artful, but indolent. This *dæmon of the south*, so he was called, was less eager to profit by the dissentions and troubles he kindled throughout Europe, than to bring them about. Sensible of the power of the popes and of religion, he knew how to convert it to his own purpose, by pretending a boundless zeal for the Catholic faith. By this conduct he became the prop and the avenger of all the Catholic countries: he forced the pope to delegate to him his immense power; he reigned as fully by persuasion as by the force of

arms. How could his enemies withſtand this double aſcendancy?

Theſe motives will explain his ſuperſtitious and continual rage. But the tardineſs of his operations became fortunately as pernicious as imprudence itſelf; and but for the miſconduct of her enemies, Spain would have loſt more than ſhe really did. Notwithſtanding this ſhow of power, was not Philip II. obliged to ſue for peace from Henry IV.? Did he not loſe Tunis and the fortreſs of Goulette? A part of the Low Countries ſhook off his yoke; and England was menaced by him in vain.

He beſtowed, at the ſame time, on trifling objects, a ſeaſon which the moſt favourable circumſtances called for in vain, to give to his fortune a full ſcope. An eccleſiaſtical broil occupied him as ſeriouſly as the affairs of the league; he took as lively an intereſt in the regulations of a chapter of monks, as in the ſucceſs of a battle. Always pliant to the will of the popes,*

* In that age, a ſovereign pontiff, at the head of an army, made an alliance with the Moſt Chriſtian King againſt the Moſt Catholic King: cardinals were ſeen wearing a broad-ſword, and brandiſhing a lance; and Cardinal Caraffa was publicly cenſured for not underſtanding tactics and military evolutions. Philip II. was entirely ſubdued by the opinions of the times. He ſigned a ſhameful treaty of peace with Paul IV. and humbled himſelf ſo far as to aſk pardon of his holineſs. The pope boaſted every moment of humbling

he manifefted, upon their reprefentations, fo violent an hatred to thofe of the reformed eftablifhment, that he facrificed his tranquillity and reputation to the defire of exterminating them. He would fecond even his enemies if they fhewed any animofity againft the proteftants. And laftly, he rejoiced at the fucceffes of a rival nation, when they were gained over thofe of the reformed perfuafion.

He was the firft to believe, or at leaft he wifhed it to be thought fo, in the pope's infallibility. His policy, undoubtedly, was to turn that facred opinion againft his enemies, and not to allow it to meet with contradiction.

The fuperiority of the houfe of Auftria was not wholly due to Charles V; he fucceded two princes, who had prepared for him a glorious

ling the pride of Spain: he oppofed the coronation of Ferdinand, brother of Philip, elected king of the Romans; he circulated a libel againft him, under the name of manifefto; he perfecuted, and caufed to be imprifoned, the Colonnefi, at all times fubjected to the Houfe of Auftria; laftly, this haughty pope claimed the right of treading kings and emperors under his feet. Under Pius V. Philip II. fhewed the fame weaknefs. If the opinion were to be conftantly maintained, that the authority of the popes, which they exercife, by divine right, upon things facred, could be extended over royal crowns, all kingdoms would, at this day, be fubject to the tiara; we fhould fee kings excommunicated, and their ftates conferred on the inftruments of this ftrange domination.

reign,

reign, Maximilian and Ferdinand. The firſt, profound in his views, had a genius perpetually at work; he divided thoſe whom he could not ſubdue. The ſecond, ſupple, bold and crafty, held nothing ſacred that was within his reach. Theſe ſovereigns formed the project of univerſal monarchy, and left it as an inheritance to their deſcendants. This idea flattered the ambition of Charles V. who ſurpriſed Europe in a moment of general commotion. Europe would have loſt her liberty, had Francis I.* and France allowed

* The rivalſhip which ſubſiſted between Francis I. and Charles V. forms a curious epoch in hiſtory. Theſe two princes, oppoſed to one another, had totally different characters, a diverſity which was even viſible in their countenances. Francis I. had a tall and ſquare perſon, a broad forehead, an aquiline noſe, and a martial air; he was of eaſy acceſs, and fluent in converſation. Charles V. had light hair, a long viſage, a wan complexion, his upper lip very thick and projecting; He was fond of retirement, and ſpoke little; he preſſed others to begin a converſation, but never opened one himſelf; he could not bear to be looked ſteadfaſtly upon; for when he wiſhed to gratify the curioſity of his grandfather, Maximilian I, who aſked him for his portrait, it was found neceſſary to place him between the points of four ſwords, that he might give the painter time to catch his lineaments. Francis I. delighted in ſplendid actions, in flattering encomiums, and in ſenſual enjoyments. He emptied his coffers in purſuit of pleaſure, without being afterwards at much trouble to fill them again. Unſkilful in contriving ſtratagems, like a redoubted knight, he expected all from his courage. Charles V. ſerious and collected, veiled an immoderate ambition, and uſed not force, till after having employed cunning and artifice. He

allowed themſelves to have been terrified and drawn into the ſnare. The bravoury of our anceſtors eſtabliſhed the balance, and ſaved the liberties of Europe.

It is very probable, that Philip II. had long hoped to unite France with Spain, ſince he endeavoured to ſubdue the royal party*. But the

He hated expence, and was very reſerved in his pleaſures, avoiding all ſcandal, and carefully concealing his favourite miſtreſs, Joan of Auſtria, ſo that his natural ſon could never diſtinguiſh which of the two ladies was his mother.

Francis I. riſked his perſon in battle. Charles V. made war chiefly by his generals, his proſperity was never interrupted, but by the check he received at Mentz, through the ſkill of the duke of Guiſe. It has been ſaid, that his mortification at that event, was the cauſe of his abdication. Francis I, hurried away by blind courage, was carried priſoner to Madrid, and loſt not the reſpect due to his rank. Theſe two rivals, who held Europe in ſuſpence, appeared with ſignal advantage in hiſtory; but after fully examining theſe two great perſonages, who form ſuch a contraſt, we are diſpoſed to prefer Francis I, becauſe his character evinced a frankneſs, and a generoſity which would have prevented him from abuſing his victory, had he gained every advantage over his adverſary. Without this martial king, the fortune of Charles V. might have reached an extent, alarming to thoſe who love to ſee the courſe of events defeat immoderate ambition, and cruſh the pride which aims at the overthrow of the barriers of national liberties.

* He ſometimes believed he had a right to Brittany; he aſſerted that, by the death of Henry III. the duchy of Brittany fell to the infanta his daughter, as heireſs of her mother, the eldeſt daughter of Henry II. This title, according to him, ought to have tranſmitted the inheritance of the houſe of Valois.

moment the French acknowledged their lawful sovereign, France resumed her superiority, and was very useful to her neighbours. Henry IV. raised the hopes of the empire, and taught its princes to bend the pride of the emperors under the majesty of the Germanic laws.

If Cardinal Richelieu afterwards humbled this formidable house of Austria, it was because he inherited the genius, and the plans of Henry the Great.*

Richelieu became the soul of all Europe: through his influence, the celebrated Gustavus Adolphus terrified the emperor, and through him Spain trembled before France. His dexterous and bold policy erected the house of Bourbon on the ruins of that of Austria, and bestowed on it the authority which the latter had enjoyed in Europe. Europe was certainly a gainer by the change; for, by ruining the greatness of the house of Austria, which aspired to

* Henry IV. wished to set bounds to the ambition and power of the house of Austria, both in Germany and in Italy. No enterprize was ever better concerted. Henry was forming a league with the elector of Brandenburgh when he was assassinated. The project of a Christian republic ascribed to the same prince, was a beautiful dream If this sublime idea was conceived in an age when knowledge was neither so great nor so diffused as at present, why has it not been resumed?

an unjuſt and immenſe domination, the power of France formed the ſhade to which many republics owe their birth, or their tranquility.

Let us confeſs, at the ſame time, that the profound policy of Richelieu had faſcinated, in a manner, the eyes of Europe; ſince he had laboured to augment conſiderably the envied power of the French. To evince this, it is to be obſerved, that Europe recurred to her former ſyſtem, when Louis XIV, giddy with his power, diſplayed a faſtidious pride. Europe, filled with alarm, embraced the intereſts of her quondam enemies, to eſtabliſh a balance, which, whether real or imaginary, was to eſtabliſh the general ſafety.

The rapid conqueſts of Louis XIV had their ſource, therefore, in the emotion Richelieu had impreſſed; and when, at this day, we conſider the unexpected preponderance given to the throne of Louis XIII; the happy depreſſion of thoſe grandees, enemies of the people, and of the king; the creation of the arts which we enjoy, and which ſeaſonably allayed the factions; and his rare and ſurpriſing foreſight on a multitude of ſubjects; we muſt regard him as the greateſt ſtateſman that France can yet boaſt. No other has poſſeſſed his genius.

It was a very intereſting ſpectacle, and one

that exhibits the moſt glorious proof of the ſteady courage of the French nation, and of its extraordinary internal reſources, when, after the delineation of the combats between the houſe of Auſtria and that of Bourbon, at the cloſe of the diſorders of our civil wars, when, at length, Philip II. was on the point of giving France to his daughter Iſabella *: this kingdom was ſeen, hardly recovered from its wounds under Henry the Great, to humble, at once, its proud and jealous neighbours, and conclude the celebrated treaty of Vervins, which was the ſignal of the depreſſion of the Spaniſh monarchy. Shall I ſay it! Spain itſelf became the inheritance of the grandſon of Louis XIV, and to the rights of birth, France added the glory of conquering that kingdom. Thus the proud houſe of Auſtria loſt its ancient ſuperiority, and loſt it for ever. We rejoice at this fall, when we conſider the diſpoſition and policy of a Maximilian, of a Ferdinand, of a Charles V. and of a Philip II.— When we reflect that, if this laſt monarch had

* The bull of Sixtus V. againſt the Bourbons, derived its force from the fanatical opinions of the age. The terms in which it is conceived muſt be deemed curious in the times in which we live. Sixtus V. ſays: *The pontifical authority is infinitely ſuperior to all the powers on earth; it thruſts the maſters of the world from their thrones; and caſts them into the bottomleſs pit as the miniſters of Satan*, &c.

liſtened to the pretenſions of Savoy, of Lorraine, and of the Guiſes, he might, perhaps, have wreſted victory from our Henry IV. and really begun to reign over France, whoſe ſtrength would have been exhauſted, we view with diſmay, the haughty ambition of the houſe of Auſtria, which might have operated the deſtruction of our national liberties.

The ſixteenth century was the moſt marked by great crimes, and great events. What ſovereigns, great God, then ſat on thrones! Catherine of Medicis, Charles IX. Henry III. Philip II. Chriſtian II. Henry VIII. not to reckon the artful and cruel popes! It is our felicity to live in times when kings are mild, and ſpare the blood of men.

Proteſtantiſm was the barrier which the Germanic circles oppoſed to the overgrown power of Charles V. A theological diſpute was converted into a rampart againſt tyranny. Under this point of view alone, we can conceive how it was, that a prince ſhould command the inquiſition to exterminate all who did not believe in *tranſubſtantiation*. But, at the ſame time, was it poſſible that a people, ſo cruelly tormented for this dogma, ſhould not put into action all their ſtrength? The reformers multiplied under the laſhes of perſecution.

Elizabeth was the author of this independance; and this is the glorious title which ſhe claims from poſterity. That princeſs, emulous of true fame, tolerating and firm, followed the tract of honour, and procured, by her wiſe adminiſtration, a great influence to England.

Holland and Zealand, diſcontented with the government of Philip II. having made a tender of their allegiance to Elizabeth, ſhe replied to their ambaſſadors, that it would ſuit neither her honour, nor her juſtice to uſurp another's rights: ſhe added, that Holland was to blame for exciting ſo much diſturbance about the *maſs*. But after holding this language, ſhe acted like a ſovereign; ſhe ſaw that the religious malcontents in Europe would become the partizans of that liberty, which Rome and the houſe of Auſtria ſtrove to annihilate.

It is alledged that Elizabeth violated the laws of nations, by affording ſuccours to the Hollanders; that ſhe ought not to have intermeddled in the diſpute; that ſhe had no right to create herſelf into a judge of the wrongs done by Philip II. to the Flemings. This is a ſophiſm; nor are ſtates more inſulted than individuals. Sound policy, the ſacred laws of humanity require, that the injuries done to one nation ſhould be perceived and felt by all the reſt. The intereſt

of ſociety at large, evidently demands, that the conſtitutive laws of a ſtate ſhall not be violated with impunity; ſociety at large ſhould intereſt itſelf in the premeditated and atrocious outrages of a blind or furious tyrant; it is the general welfare that ſhould preſide over all the movements of political bodies: and ſuch is the eſſential object of European ſociety.

What, ſhall a whole nation calmly behold the blood of a neighbouring nation ſtreaming under extravagant and barbarous caprices! When human laws are violated, the primitive rights are then univerſally reſumed. To aſſiſt an oppreſſed people, and prop its generous efforts: this is the powerful cry of nature; a cry conformable to the principles of natural liberty, and reciprocally beneficial to all nations, ſince it embraces the intereſt of the whole people, in oppoſition to that of a few ſovereigns.

The ſtate which ſhould take no concern in the heavy calamities of its neighbours, which ſhould turn a deaf ear to their groans, or which ſhould attend only to what hurts its own particular intereſts, would hazard the poſſibility of never claiming the mediation, or ſuccour of a bordering power, that ancient and ſacred right of the wretched; the oppreſſors would reign eternal on earth, and violate, at eaſe, the privi-

leges of the ſocial contract, by paſſing the barriers of the living laws.

I know that the deſpot, ever ſuſpicious, will cry out rebellion, when the leaſt ſigh is heard: but every prince, every generous people, will fly to the aſſiſtance of a nation cruſhed under a yoke of iron, or diſtracted by anarchy; they will dare to reclaim the rights of nature; they will not ſuffer a violent ſovereign, or a revolted people, to endanger the laws of public and private ſecurity. Political principles, viewed on a grand ſcale, are not confined to narrow points; a contracted and deaf policy deceives, and aſſumes every ſtamp of inſenſibility; the great intereſt of humanity, beheld in future ages, and in an immenſe compaſs, illumines the genius, and never miſleads.

Theſe principles are happily conſecrated in the hiſtory of Europe, by the example of Switzerland and of Holland. Henry IV. performed for the Helvetic cantons what Elizabeth had done for the United Provinces.

Yes! it pleaſed God that the ſavage Philip II. ſhould be chained by his neighbours! If he abetted a powerful party in Paris to rend France, was it not lawful to reſcue his unhappy ſubjects from the burning piles of the inquiſition, and to repreſs that religious ferocity which armed thoſe

innumerable

innumerable executioners, whoſe carnage ſucceeded that of his ſoldiery? For the executioners went from town to town, at the command of the Duke of Alva, making the ſtreets run with blood, and joining outrage to cruelty.

Philip II. having conſtituted himſelf the pope's *generaliſſimo*, obtained by this ſtep the ſucceſſive deſtruction of all the privileges which ſtood in his way, or which might cramp that deſpotiſm ſo dear to his ſoul: he eſtabliſhed himſelf monarch over the church, and enjoyed, in reality, the terrible power of the Roman pontiffs. Pius V. of mean birth, acted in concert with Philip II. adopted his projects, promoted them, and appeared moſt obſtinately bent on the deſtruction of the Proteſtants. The Spaniſh monarch had judged that Calviniſm being the mode of worſhip the beſt ſuited to the conſtitution of free ſtates, it was neceſſary to deſtroy root and branch, a reformation which could not amalgamate with monarchy, where the limit of power is equivocal, or at leaſt undetermined.

Calviniſm, it muſt be confeſſed, was introduced by men of obſcure condition, always jealous of a luxury which they did not ſhare, always enemies of the authority which bears heavier on them than on the rich. By the deſtruction of the deſpotiſm of Rome, they fancied they

ſhould

ſhould obtain an entire independance. The Catholic faith appeared to them the active ſoul of tyranny: their fortune not permitting them to indulge in the pleaſures or diſſipation of opulence, they were angry with whatever bore the marks of magnificence. Hence they ſtript temples of their ornaments, and deprived religion of all its ſpendour.

The object of the reformers was to annihilate all diſtinction of ranks in ſociety. Their auſtere deportment, their myſtical jargon diſpleaſed the great. Rigid in the extreme, they regarded the moſt innocent recreations as crimes, and the ſmalleſt toleration of the rites of the Romiſh church as an abomination meriting puniſhment. The rich and abſolute monarchs, ſurrounded by all the inſtruments of their power, naturally oppoſed theſe opinions which retrenched their authority and their enjoyments. Philip II. agreed to make every conceſſion to thoſe whom he termed rebels, the liberty of conſcience excepted. *I will never grant it*, he exclaimed, *although I ſhould riſk my crown*. He looked upon this liberty of conſcience, as the diſſolution of the political principles he had adopted.

Thus, when the inquiſition exterminated all who had the misfortune not to believe that God was bread, that God was wine, the object was

not precisely to subdue men to that belief, but to establish a rigorous respect for the property and possessions of the ecclesiastics: mysteries were the true safe guard of their property held abusively; the ambition of the priests made it their deepest interest to confound the words *heresy* and *rebellion.*

Elizabeth, on her part, regarded the French as declared enemies. The court of France had had it in contemplation to raise Mary Stuart to the throne of England, and declared Elizabeth a bastard and usurper. Mezeray said openly; *that it was not the interest of France to suffer Elizabeth to possess herself of a crown which belonged to Mary Stuart.*

The princes of Lorraine having procured the marriage of their niece with the dauphin, afterwards king of France, by the name of Francis II. had an indecent farce acted at Paris, the subject of which was the *coronation of Elizabeth.* Her mother and she were there treated as actresses.

Elizabeth, who considered a divided as a lost authority, was utterly averse to bestow her hand on Philip II. Firm in her sentiments, can it be supposed, that she would have raised to the throne a prince, the son of the potent Charles V? Besides, Elizabeth could not espouse this mo-

narch without a diſpenſation from Rome, which would have been an acknowledgement of the pope's authority. Every thing, therefore, favoured Calviniſm.

But the Calviniſts, by pillaging the goods of the eccleſiaſtics, provoked too keenly the anathemas of that order. The latter, ſeeing the barrier of opinions, till then reſpected, broken down, judged that their riches, reſting on that firm baſis, were about to fall before the rigid opinions of the reformers: France herſelf would have become entirely Proteſtants, but for the violent exceſſes which the reformers committed, ſo unmanageable were they, after the conference of Poiſſy. Their anti-political inflexibility, which the Proteſtants may now deeply regret, bereaved their doctrine of the glory of invading a whole kingdom. And what ſucceſſes would have followed ſo conſiderable an advantage!

During theſe conteſts, morality was buried in a frightful chaos. Scholaſtic theology, that many headed monſter, reigned alone, to involve all in darkneſs. It dictated thoſe irrefragable maxims which terrify and confound human reaſon. It kindled fires in this world, and extended the flames of the inquiſition even into eternity; no comforting light ſhone on the rights of man, civil or political; every thing was ſtampt,

even in hiſtory and literature, by the gloomy diſpoſition of the ſchools; every thing was ſubordinate to a ſpirit of fury, of intolerance, and of theological jargon, which ſpread on all ſides. Fanaticiſm, at length, looſened from her chains, ſtalked over Europe, her head wrapped in a cowl, her eyes bound with a fillet, and a torch blazing in her hand.

The liberty of thinking, the firſt prerogative of man, had not even a name; the ſupremacy of the popes had begun to bring on this deplorable eclipſe of human reaſon. The ambition and the ferocity of Philip II. contributed to thicken the darkneſs, and attempted to wreſt from man his impreſcriptible rights, and, with them, the memory of every duty, of all the virtues, and of the human intelligences.

While this terrible monarch, pretending to infallibility, after the example of the ſovereign pontiff, was meditating by the force of arms and the ſword of executioners, the deſtruction of all who bore the name of Proteſtant, he cauſed the aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange, whom he could not ſeduce from the intereſt of the Low Countries. The death of counts Egmont and Horn, had already been the ſignal of the fate of the eighteen lords, tried by a ſpecial commiſſion. But can the hiſtory even of the Roman emperors,

perors, produce a recorded fact more completely odious than the proſcription of Philip II. againſt the firſt Statholder of Holland? Can we read the following ſentence without ſhuddering? *We promiſe, on the faith and word of a king, and as the miniſter of God, that if any perſon will be ſo generous as to rid the world of this peſt, by delivering him to us, dead or alive, or by taking away his life, we ſhall beſtow on him a reward of twenty thouſand crowns: if he has perpetrated any crime, of whatſoever magnitude, we ſhall pardon it; if he is not noble, we ſhall confer on him nobility: we ſhall alſo forgive the crimes which his adherents may have committed, and will even ennoble them.* Ennoble them!——And on his part, the ſavage Duke of Alva vied in barbarity with Philip II. he boaſted, coolly, that he had cauſed eighteen thouſand of his fellow-citizens to periſh on the ſcaffold!

The prince of Orange, after having eſcaped two conſpiracies, was the victim of a fanatic native of Franche-Comté, who fancied himſelf inſpired. On the news of the aſſaſſination, Philip II. ſaid: *The blow ought to have been inflicted a dozen years ago; religion would have been a gainer by it.* The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, that carnage unparalleled in the annals of the world, occaſioned rejoicings at Madrid,

drid, while it filled every other court of Europe with grief and consternation.

Philip II. wished to enslave Flanders only to strip that province of its riches; but these *beggars* (this was the appellation he vouchsafed the revolted Flemings) laid, by their courage, the foundations of a republic since become flourishing. They showed that nothing is impossible to a people firmly resolved either to be free, or to perish in the struggle. The inquisition, which crushed the innovators under its immediate jurisdiction, promoted Lutheranism at a distance; and the hatred borne to the bishops, or rather to the iron rod of Philip II. hastened that revolution which astonished Europe.

What were the Hollanders about the middle of the sixteenth century? Their sudden elevation is, perhaps, the most astonishing event in modern history. Sailors and fishermen, occupying a small marshy country, they contended with the sea, which seemed to threaten their destruction, and defended themselves against the best soldiers in Europe, whom Spain paid with the gold of Mexico and of Peru.

They must have appeared rash in conceiving the hope of resisting their formidable master, who marched against them his soldiery and his executioners. But an invincible perseverance

ſupplied the want of real ſtrength: they vigorouſly reſiſted Spain; and, obliged to reckon only upon their own efforts, through the dint of cultivating the ocean, by an indefatigable commerce they ſeized the treaſures and poſſeſſions of Spain, which was exhauſted, notwithſtanding the mines of America.

Could it have been imagined, at the origin of the conteſt, not only that Spain, become too feeble a match for them, ſhould be conſtrained to acknowledge the independance of this handful of men, the objects of its ſcorn, but that Holland ſhould alſo become its ſupport, and that this ſtate, emerged from the marſhes of the ocean, ſhould, in 1710, diſpoſe, at will, of the throne of the Spaniards, its ancient tyrants? *

Was ever a people ſeen to grow ſo rapidly, to rear, in the ſpace of a century and a half, flouriſhing cities, to ſend ſhips from pole to pole,

* From Philip II. to Philip V. how aſtoniſhing was the fortune of this commonwealth, incapable for two hundred and fifty years before to maintain its inhabitants. It formed alliances with rich and flouriſhing nations more warlike than itſelf. It was neceſſary to ſurmount a thouſand combined obſtacles, and to obſerve a prudent conduct, to be able thus to figure amidſt warlike powers. But that ſpirit of commerce which founded its exiſtence, abſorbing all other ideas, has at laſt turned againſt itſelf.

and to eſtabliſh a footing in all parts of the world, eſpecially in Oriental Aſia ? *

What advantage did this deſpot, the moſt powerful prince in Europe, reap from ſo many cruelties, intrigues, and wars ? He ruined his own ſtates ; and, after having drained the mines of America, left a debt amounting to *a hundred and forty millions of ducats*. A blind obſtinacy involved him in a ſeries of political blunders. Holland was a patrimony he held of his father ; he might have there reigned peaceably. He provoked that people ; he drove the Flemings to revolt. What an humiliation to this haughty monarch ! After having formed the extravagant project of ſubjugating France and England, after having believed that his political machinations would defeat the ſcience of the chiefs of the league, after having aided the revolters in neigh-

* If, inſtead of the ſolid advantages of commerce, the Hollanders had been ambitious for the glory of conqueſts, they might eaſily, with their naval armaments, have diſmayed the deſpots of India, of China, and of Japan. Have they not ports for equipment and reception extremely favorable to a victorious expedition ; ſuch as the Cape, the iſles of Java, Malaca, Ceylon, the Muluccas, &c. ? With theſe ſtations, refreſhing at the Cape of Good Hope, and at Batavia, they might maintain a war on the coaſts of Aſia, from Surate to Canton, and from China to Jedos, the capital of Japan, cities which a few bomb-gallies could reduce to aſhes. They have not done this ; they have acted more wiſely ; they have acquired riches by trading with theſe opulent countries.

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bouring kingdoms, and fomented every divifion, he had the grief to fee the ftates of Brabant, of Flanders, of Zealand, of Holland, and of Friezeland, invite a foreign yoke; he faw *thefe beggars* who had the ironical appellation of a *wooden porringer*, fet him at defiance; he loft a country richer at prefent than all the Spanifh dominions.* Thus the violation of the laws conduced not to his intereft; and all thofe perfecutions, to force the confcience of his fubjects, only revolted the moral inftinct which repels outrages and injuft or vexatious edicts.

Illuftrious example! The States-General, affembled at the Hague, declared folemnly, that

* The inhabitants of the Netherlands labored a long time to league with England; but Elizabeth, always cautious, did not confent to that alliance till fhe faw the United Provinces had proceeded too far ever to accept again the Spanifh yoke. The Spaniards who remained in the Netherlands prepared all the miferies that afflicted that country for the fpace of twenty years. The fame principle of perfecution which had drained Spain of men and money, and which kindled penal fires in all the towns of the Netherlands, dictated foon after the mad edict which commanded, under pain of death, all the Moors to leave the kingdom in thirty days: the inquifitors advifed this meafure. This ftep expelled a million of inhabitants, the moft ufeful through their induftry and labor. The atrocious deeds of fanaticifm would appear incredible, did not hiftory bear witnefs to them. Another act of barbarity nearer our age, an age too celebrated by poets, ought to fhow us that the delirium of fanaticifm is not, perhaps, wholly extinguifhed, or rather, that it is reproduced in a thoufand different forms.

Philip II. having violated the privileges of the people, had forfeited the ſovereignty. Their reſolve implied theſe maxims: that the people are not created for the prince, but the prince appointed by God for the people; that there cannot be a prince without the people, and yet the people may ſubſiſt without a prince; that a tyrant breaks the bonds of obedience.

His ambition, therefore, gained nothing by diſturbing Europe: ſterility and wretchedneſs marked a country where he vainly ſquandered enormous riches, to compel the ſectaries to receive the yoke of the Romiſh church.

But while we deteſt his deſpotiſm and his ferocity, let us do juſtice to the talents which he poſſeſſed: he had the dextrous policy to maintain the internal tranquillity of Spain; he had the penetration to chooſe proper miniſters—he even formed them himſelf. Was it neceſſary that the republic of Genoa ſhould preſerve his duchy of Milan? He bound theſe republicans to his intereſt by golden chains, and contrived to bring about marriages between the nobility of Caſtille, Catalonia, Arragon, Navarre, Valencia, and Italy.

It muſt alſo be admitted that he poſſeſſed a profound knowledge of mankind. He had the talent of ſtudying carefully the character of his

miniſters before he ſet them at work; his attention was indefatigable on this point, the one moſt intereſting to a monarch who could not view ſo many objects but with the eye of another. To be able to divine the capacity of the men one employs, merits applauſe: this perception is the firſt of talents, eſpecially in a prince; by it, he knows how to reign, and reigns effectually; and ſeldom is he deceived, when thus on his guard. But as Philip's tyrannical diſpoſition was known, his miniſters acted up to his principles, and wiſhed to reſemble him. That inflexible firmneſs rarely ſuits political affairs; and he too eaſily complied with the counſels of the duke of Alva, who, under a calm aſpect, concealed a cruel ſoul. He paid his facility by the loſs of the ſeven United Provinces.

The inſatiable avidity of the duke of Alva cannot be delineated in too ſtrong colours. He trampled under foot every law, human and divine, and left every where the bloody traces of his fatal power.

Attention and vigilance characteriſed the monarch in certain parts of his government; he commanded his council to diſcuſs in his preſence the advantages and perils of any enterprize. In doubtful affairs, he took their advice

in writing; he thought deeply, and viewed both ſides of a ſcheme. But when the ſubject concerned heretics, he obſerved no laws of decency or diſcretion; he nouriſhed againſt them a devouring hatred which fermented in his ſoul. He was, with reſpect to them, the moſt cruel of perſecutors.

Yet he entertained no ſuch high veneration for the eccleſiaſtics,* as to forbear puniſhing them when they had offended him. He hanged coolly *a ſcore of preachers* of different orders, for having declared from the pulpit in Portugal that he had uſurped the crown; and he even replied to Gregory XIII. who had attempted to interpoſe in this diſpute, that his rights reſted on his ſword. Thus he obſerved little ceremony with the prieſts of his own church when his pride or his intereſt was concerned; and this conduct muſt throw a light on the policy which preſerved the appearance and mummery of external devotion, the better to ſeize, with a conſummate addreſs, the temporal authority.

* The archbiſhop of Toledo left at his death a million of crowns to be applied to pious purpoſes. Philip II. appropriated to himſelf this ſum, directing two or three unbeneficed doctors to decide that, *as father of the poor*, he was the heir of that prelate. So many contradictory actions occur in his life, that the hiſtorian feels himſelf embarraſſed.

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After having viewed him on the throne, his private life presents to us the same character of hypocrisy, rigor, and cruelty. Don Carlos cost his mother her life: on the fourth day after her delivery, she could not restrain an unfeeling curiosity to view the spectacle exhibited by the inquisiton. What a presage! This horrid son of Charles V. was born ferocious and inaccessible to all pity; for, notwithstanding his rank, he feasted his eyes with beholding the expiring agonies of the unhappy martyrs of the inquisition. He blushed not to avow, that if an executioner should be needed, he would not scruple to perform the office himself. He seemed (I tremble at the recital) yes, he seemed to feed on the thick vapour which rose from the smoking bodies, and at these horrid and disgusting spectacles he had spies charged to read in the eyes of the spectators, the compassion with which they might be touched. These satellites watched the sighs, the involuntary heavings of nature; and from this information, those who had felt too lively a pity were delivered over to the inquisitors.

He appeared only once in arms: it was on the day when a breach was made, and the town of St. Quintin carried by assault. But his fear was

was ſo great during the battle, that he vowed*, if he ſhould eſcape, to build and conſecrate a magnificent monaſtery to St. Lawrence. He added a church and a palace, and directed that theſe edifices ſhould have the form of a *gridiron*, becauſe St. Lawrence, according to the legend, had been roaſted upon a *gridiron*. Such is the origin of the eſcurial, which coſt ſuch an immenſe ſum. But he loſt the fruits of this battle, which promiſed ſuch mighty advantages, that Charles V. in his religious retirement, informed of the victory, aſked if his ſon was in Paris†. Count Egmont, whom he afterwards had

* He made, by reſervation, another vow, never to appear again in battle.

† He took in a convent of monks the Chriſtian advice, very uſeful to France, *that he ought not to drive his enemies to deſpair*. This counſel, adopted in a cloiſter, was purſued. The French reſumed a new courage, and ſeized on Calais, which, for 200 years, had belonged to England. He was equally merciful to the Italians. The duke of Alva, commander of his forces, wiſhed to humble an ambitious pontiff, and Rome was in his power. Philip II. wrote to his general that, *he would rather loſe his crown than diſpleaſe the pope*. And, while the duke of Alva advanced to take poſſeſſion of that capital of the world, he ordered the apologies of the king of Spain to be made to the pope, even by the mouth of the conqueror. He reſtored to the Holy See all the diſmantled places; he accepted ſhameful terms of peace. This conduct could only be the fruit of his education. His governor pulled off his hat when he ſaw, thirty paces off, a man wearing an eccleſiaſtical habit. His fanatic diſpoſition

had beheaded, gained him the battle of Gravelines, of which he profited as little.

Raiſed to the throne by the abdication of Charles V. the firſt act of his power was to break a truce which his father had made with the French. As ungrateful a ſon as he was afterwards a bad father, a barbarous huſband, a pitileſs maſter, a dangerous friend, an unfaithful ally; diſſembling, miſtruſtful, vindictive, his hatred to the Proteſtants bordered on frenzy.

With pride he blended vanity; he required

poſition diſplayed itſelf from his infancy. Charles V. arranged his eſpouſals with Mary, queen of England. It would be difficult to ſhow the advantage of that marriage: Philip, by the conditions, was not allowed in England to retain a Spaniard in his ſervice, but the peace of Chateau Cambreſis reflected glory on his arms and on his policy; it occaſioned in the ſequel, the unfortunate marrige of Philip with Iſabella of France. He ſought to eſpouſe Elizabeth, who was already ſeated on the throne; but if he poſſeſſed any penetration, it was needed when he expected to ſhare the bed and the ſceptre of a woman poſſeſſed of ſo great a genius. The artful Sixtus V. urged Phillip to haſten his attempts againſt England; but if we ſearch into the crafty genius of that pope, we ſhall be tempted to believe that he was in underſtanding with Elizabeth, and that all the offers he made to Philip II. were only ſo many ſnares. He tried to uſurp the kingdom of Portugal, and join it to his dominions. The cardinal Henry had appeared merely to hold it, to give Philip II. time to prepare for diſputing it with the natural heir Don Antony. He had adviſed Sebaſtian, king of Portugal, to venture himſelf at a great hazard in Africa; he periſhed there, and theologians armed with arguments completed the victory.

that

that no perſon ſhould ſpeak to him, otherwiſe than kneeling; he made even the accomplices of his cruelties to tremble, and the moſt faithful miniſter of his royal vengeance, chancing one day to enter his cloſet without being introduced, was ſaluted with theſe tremendous words: *an effrontery like yours deſerves the axe.*

When he ordered the counts Egmont and Horn to ſuffer on a ſcaffold, he ſaid, that he cut off their heads, becauſe *the heads of ſalmon are more valuable than ſeveral thouſand frogs.*

The convents were the principal objects of his bounty; and if he was liberal to monks, he was as extravagant to concubines: he ſqandered gold and diamonds profuſely in the purſuit of his pleaſures.

He never trod upon the tombs, becauſe over the epitaph there is ſometimes a croſs. Quieting his conſcience by theſe pious mummeries, he put to death fifty thouſand Proteſtants; and his wars, according to his own confeſſion, coſt him 564 millions of ducats.

Although attached to the dogmas of the catholic religion, he had numerous miſtreſſes *. He

* Pleaſure, which ſometimes ſoftens the heart of man, uſually hardens that of ſovereign deſpots. Tyranny is not extinguiſhed in the habit of indulgence; it grows more inſenſible in the midſt of debauchery:

He lived in adultery with Anne of Mendoza, whoſe huſband he had appointed to adminiſter to his pleaſures. He had a rival in the unfortunate Eſcovedo. The jealous and exaſperated monarch commanded the informer to aſſaſſinate with his own hand the accuſed.

He alſo cauſed Don Juan de la Nuſe to be decapitated by the viceroy of Arragon; and this, as it appears, not merely for the ſake of religion. Joſeph Andrada was charged with the moſt ſecret and moſt enormous enterprizes.

He employed every expedient to conceal, and withhold from the public eye his natural daughters, by ſhutting them up in cloiſters; and in his profound hypocriſy, he had always the art of palliating his vices. The fires perpetually burning for the heretics, muſt of themſelves have waſted away; but he rekindled the zealous fury of the inquiſition, when it was weary with ſhedding blood.

This cruel king governed a nation in the height of its glory, fluſhed with its ſucceſſes, and riſing in ſtatelineſs above the ſurrounding kingdoms. But Philip II. forgot his own

debauchery: this is the fire which hardens clay. Nero plunged into crimes with the poiſon of enjoyment! every thing ſours, in a heart naturally vicious- The Roman emperors joined the moſt unbridled licentiouſneſs to the moſt atrocious cruelties.

ſtrengt,h

ſtrength, and perplexed his negociations with ſubleties which made him loſe, in intrigues and contradictory meaſures, a real and very extenſive power. This verſatile policy ſuits ſmall republics and limitted ſtates; but thoſe which have weight and greatneſs ought to reject ſuch low cunning, and purſue the attainment of their objects with lofty ideas and military diſcipline.

Diſſimulation, it muſt be confeſſed, is ſometimes neceſſary in a king: the paſſions of thoſe around him are often ſo ardent, that he cannot refrain from temporizing with them. But Philip II. was an impoſter rather than a diſſembler. He was not born for the place which he occupied at that great epoch; it required a profound genius, and his was only ſubtle. He introduced into the ſcience of governing, the employment of ſpies, whom the moſt ſecret intrigues could not eſcape. A great king ought not to have this reſtleſs curioſity; nor ſhould he leſſen himſelf by ſo prying a vigilance. The ſecret actions of men concern him not; he ought to intereſt himſelf alone in thoſe which tend to diſturb the tranquility of the ſtate.

A great event in his domeſtic life ſtill excites at this day, the curioſity of the world. Mezeria, a ſevere but faithful hiſtorian, makes this poſſitive aſſertion: *He is certain that Philip II. poiſoned*

poiſoned his conſort, and took her off, when ſhe was big with child. But many other hiſtorians deny the crime of poiſoning, and affirm that Elizabeth died of melancholy, at the cataſtophe of Don Carlos. Philip II. however, was undoubtedly guilty of parricide. The tragical ſtory of Don Carlos is well founded; for the king delivered over his ſon to the hatred of the inquiſitors, an hatred avowed and rendered too public by indecent invectives. But the inquiſition and Philip II. were the ſame.

This monarch, who had ſhed torrents of blood during a reign of forty-four years*, died calmly at the age of ſeventy-four. Two days before his death he ſaw, in a viſion, the heavens open: afflicted by a horrible and tedious diſtemper, he was patient and firm; he received fourteen times the ſupreme unction: his conſcience did not reproach him.

Who will pronounce, who will venture to pronounce on the religion of this prince? Was it poſſible that he could be ſincere in his profeſſions? In this point of view I conſider his pious

* Hiſtory relates that he cut off, by the ſword or poiſon, upwards of fifty thouſand men. He ſaid to the phyſicians who were afraid to bleed him: Draw without fear a few drops of blood from the veins of a king, who has ordered floods of it to run from the heretics.

frenzy

frenzy as an incurable one, and that his monstrous principles and superstitious belief were, on that account, so much the more detestable. But it is more probable, that he thought by the practice of devotion to efface the crimes of his public and private life; an inconceivable error, but too common in that unhappy age, when morality and sound policy had no rule or measure.

It was by his direction, that the beautiful *Polyglot Bible*, which bears his name, was printed at Antwerp. He ordained that the fourteenth year should be the term of the majority of the kings of Spain.

Philip II. was a little man*. I have already remarked that the passions, concentrated, per-

* He was little in mind as well as body in a multitude of things: at one time he lowered his pride so much, as to eat at the refectory with the monks; at another he ordered a woman out of his presence who had laughed in blowing her nose. He entered no monastery without kissing all the relics; he had his bread baked with water from the fountain said to work miracles; he boasted his never having danced, and never having worn breeches in the Greek fashion; he interrupted, out of modesty, the harangues addressed to him; he was very grave in all his actions; but he gave way to extravagant transports, when he received intelligence of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He had little esteem for poets; and when asked the reason, he made this sensible reply: *that they knew not how to keep within the bounds of modesty.* Fortune assisted him more than his talents.

ſonal, and violent, take up their abode in preference in perſons of ſmall ſtature: in general, diminutive creatures are more than others iracible and vicious.

In the mean time the new opinions drew the attention of all men; the reformation ſpread in ſpite of the fires of the inquiſition. France remained in ſuſpence; a national council was demanded on all ſides; and Catherine of Medicis herſelf propoſed to the pope, to remove the images from the churches, to permit the communion cup to the laity, to aboliſh *Corpus Chriſti* day, and to celebrate maſs in the vulgar tongue.

The French complained loudly of the council of Trente; the wags, to paint the influence of the court of Rome, ſaid, *that it had ſent the Holy Ghoſt in the portmanteau of the nuncio.*

The ambaſſadors of France endeavoured to cruſh the aſcendency of the legates and Italians; but theſe, with their uſual addreſs, managed every thing is favour of the pope.

Lamez, general of the Jeſuits, maintained that from the pope alone emanated all ſpiritual authority; that he comprehended *the whole hierarchy*. Father Paul, in his hiſtory of the council, unravels the web of intrigues that were practiſed, and ſets in a clear light the vain ſub-

tleties which were too much blended in affairs of ſo much moment.

This famous council, which ought to have done away the many exceſſive abuſes that provoked the cenſure of the innovators, was forward only to augment the eccleſiaſtical immunities which ages of ignorance had beſtowed.

The ancient ſpirit of domination appeared in all its loftineſs, and rouſed the oppoſition of a part of the French nation, which has ſince rejected conſtantly ſo ſevere a diſcipline.

The council of Trent taxed with hereſy every diſcourſe which tended to weaken the juriſdiction of the eccleſiaſtics; hardly were the rights of ſovereignty ſhielded from their attacks.

This famous council did not cloſe till the year 1563. It met with a various reception in different ſtates. The king of Spain ſhewed in public the greateſt ſubmiſſion; but what may at preſent be regarded as a precious ſtroke of his character, he gave ſecret orders for maintaining the royal authority. The chancellor de l'Hopital and the parliament oppoſed ſtrenuouſly the publication of the acts of the council.

It ſerved merely to diſguſt and inflame the Proteſtants, all hope of reſtoring whom to the boſom of the church vaniſhed. The *index* of the books prohibited widened the breach; the

authors

authors and their works, diſhonoured in this *index*, obtained numerous partizans, becauſe a ſacerdotal diſpoſition ſo violent muſt have provoked all enlightened minds; and ſome of theſe are found in every age.

Pius V. had burnt as heretics ſeveral perſons diſtinguiſhed by their knowledge; among others the learned *Palearius*, whoſe crime was the having called the Holy Inquiſition, *a poignard levelled at the head of men of letters* *. The fate of the philoſophers was, at this period, lamentable. Ramus had been aſſaſſinated by his ſcholars; others were obliged to fly † from the purſuit

* The ſucceſſors of Palearius fully avenged his fate; for men of letters never pardon thoſe who attack their liberty. From age to age, they raiſe a cry of reproach and deteſtation, which ſpreads and gains force, till the oppreſſor is delivered over with everlaſting infamy to future generations.

† Among theſe, we diſtinguiſh Fauſtus Socinus. Equally remote from the Catholics and Proteſtants, who underſtood not one another, he wiſhed to reconcile the oppoſite parties. He attached himſelf to the divine morality of the goſpel, which recommends peace and charity. He honoured Jeſus Chriſt as a ſage, endued with a ſuper natural virtue, whom God had made the immediate organ of precepts, the beſt calculated to lead men in the way of their duty, and in the practice of the virtues. This doctrine, which oppoſed not human reaſon, and which terminated theological diſputes, offended both the Catholics and the Proteſtants, jealous of dogmatizing, and who ſubſtituted the pride of argumentation for evangelical charity. Fauſtus Socinus, who, with his philoſophical ideas, could not have eſcaped the fury of the inquiſition, fearing no leſs the

purſuit of the obſtinate perſecutors of conſciences, who fancied they were avenging the cauſe of God.

When we reflect that theſe events, ſo extraordinary, are in a manner recent, we cannot fail to be aſtoniſhed at what has paſſed. What obligations are now due to that philoſophical ſpirit which has demonſtrated the emptineſs and diſgrace of thoſe violent and ſenſeleſs diſputes originating from modes of worſhip?

May the ſtudy of hiſtory enable us, therefore, to appreciate the advantages of the preſent times; may it cure us eſpecially of that dangerous error which would perſuade us that we live in a degraded or degenerated age! Nothing is more falſe. Who would regret his not having lived in the ſixteenth century, amidſt ſo many bloody tempeſts, under thoſe feeble, ferocious, or ſuperſtitious monarchs? The eccleſiaſtical yoke then preſſed on every ſide, and diſtorted men's characters into hypocriſy.

the apoſtles of Geneva, went to found his ſeat in Poland and Tranſylvania: being afterwards proſcribed, it took root in Holland and England. This peaceful reformer, whoſe name will never periſh, died in 1604.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

DIALOGUE BETWEEN MONTESQUIEU AND THE ABBE GUASCO.*

Monteſquieu.

GOOD day, my dear Abbé.

The Abbé.

What a ſurpriſe is this! and how fortunate the meeting! who would have expected to find you here?

Monteſquieu.

The ſight of you fills me with equal wonder! How happens it that you have quitted your own fine country, Italy?

The Abbé.

Ah! I ſhall return thither.

Monteſquieu.

Such is alſo my intention. Whither are you now going?

The Abbé.

To Paris.

Monteſquieu.

Accompany me rather to my chateau. It is the fineſt rural ſpot I know of! Nature is there clad in her *robe-de-chambre*, and in a charming *négligé*.

* They are ſuppoſed to meet at Marſeilles.

The Abbé.

What! is the prefident then become a ruftic?

Montefquieu.

Truly fo. And, take my word for it, to this you yourfelf will come at laft. I am going to plant cabbages at la Bréde. My chateau, entirely in the Gothic tafte, is at prefent worthy to receive him who has travelled every where. Be of the party, I entreat you. We will continue there till Martinmas; and there we will walk together, will ftudy together, will plant woods, and make meadows.

The Abbé.

The capital fummons me againft my will. I have been folacing myfelf with the idea of furprifing you at Paris.

Montefquieu.

It is a place which I fhall not vifit for this year at leaft. I am too poor to live in that city, where we are told every pleafure is to be found, becaufe its diffipations make us forgetful of life. Since I have ceafed to be harraffed by the fuppers of the capital, my mind and my ftomach have both been benefited. Truft me, my friend, temperance is the moft exalted and delicate of pleafures—you muft give it a trial.

The Abbé.

I have travelled almoſt every where; and wherever I have been I have heard your great work ſpoken of: the diſtinguiſhed man of letters lives where he has no phyſical exiſtence. Foreigners, by the by, underſtand your production better than do your countrymen. In France a haſty judgment is formed of it; but it requires ſome ſtudy.

Monteſquieu.

I have myſelf made that obſervation, and I may ſay, without vanity, that ſuch is my perſuaſion.

The Abbé.

It is a work which begins to effect a revolution in the minds of all. Tranſlations are every where made of it.

Monteſquieu.

So much the better! The ſubject is fine and great—unqueſtionably too great for me, notwithſtanding I have devoted to it my whole life. Another who ſhould have beſtowed on it the ſame labour, would, perhaps, have ſucceeded better: for my part it has almoſt killed me, and has given me grey hairs before my time.

The Abbé.

Thus is your head crowned with immortal laurels!

Mon-

Montesquieu.

Softly, softly, my friend. I have only laid the ground-work for something better.

The Abbé.

You will be the cause of a new legislation, which will become universal. Ages to come, abandoning error, will advance to perfection with the help of a more pure light. What is just and good will convince by its very simplicity, and, in spite of every obstacle, will reach the heart of those in whose hands the executive trust shall be placed.

Montsequieu.

This is the reflection that consoles me. To them justice is a quality as proper as their existence. But, alas! when will they be persuaded of their real interest?

The Abbé.

Having been so successful, why do you not satisfy the general expectation, by giving to the public a detail of your travels?

Montesquieu.

Whenever I can find leisure, depend on it I shall make the necessary arrangements for that purpose.

The Abbé.

You have been able to see to the bottom of that of which others have been enabled to ob-

tain a glimpſe only. What think you of England?

Monteſquieu.

I, who am ſo little ſubject to violent emotions, have been there raviſhed, tranſported.

The Abbé.

You have diſplayed the beauty of the Engliſh government better even than the Engliſh authors themſelves. But having ſince viſited England, you muſt———

Monteſquieu.

Ah! why has my book already made its appearance? I have ſaid nothing that I ought to have ſaid. *(Strenuouſly)* The people of England reſemble the ſea with which they are ſurrounded, always either agitated or majeſtically tranquil: a ſhort ſtorm purifies the air, and brings a calm which is never that of inſenſibility. Yes, the Engliſh may glory in the conſtitution the moſt conformable to the dignity of human nature. The three integral parts of the government are united and combined in the moſt advantageous way, ſince even the defects ſerve to maintain the general equilibrium. Factions in the mean time prevent political corruption. The idea of repreſentatives is a modern one: it is ſublime, and the reſult of a ſage and long experience! I am delighted with the ſtamp

of

of perſpicuouſneſs and grandeur it bears! Ah! truſt me, liberty is ſafer in the hands of repreſentatives than in thoſe of the people themſelves.

The Abbé.

You tranſport me when you thus expreſs yourſelf: every friend of liberty ſhould direct his attention to that Iſland.

Monteſquieu.

Undoubtedly: and the exiſting example of the admirable Engliſh conſtitution will be at once the model of other ſtates, and the terror of tyrants. The ſhadow of that auguſt republic is calculated to intimidate deſpotiſm.*

The Abbé.

I agree with you, and offer up my hearty prayers for its proſperity. Beſides that the power of the monarch may be moſt preciſely balanced by an intermediate and indeſtructible body, the depoſitary and guardian of the laws,

* Let me quote Monteſquieu's words. "In England the laws not being framed more for one individual than another, every one has a right to conſider himſelf as a MONARCH. No citizen entertaining a dread of any other citizen, that nation ought to be proud; for the pride of KINGS is founded entirely on their independance." The expreſſion here is viſibly exaggerated; and it is ridiculous to repreſent the Engliſh as a *nation of kings*. But improperly as Monteſquieu has expreſſed himſelf, we can ſtill comprehend what he was deſirous to infer from his argument.

in England the right of each individual is rigorously established, an advantage certainly of no small import.

Montesquieu.

In England the men are more men, and the women less women than elsewhere. The various laws which have been successively established, and which form the rampart of public liberty, seem to have hastened the progress of the arts and sciences: their intimate connection with the felicity of the people is there most clearly perceived and felt.

The Abbé.

There is, however, one great inconvenience: the weight of the taxes is considerable, and of this the English themselves complain.

Montesquieu.

Not those who are the best informed, I protest to you. In proportion as liberty diminishes, so ought the taxes to diminish, and to augment in proportion as liberty increases. The paucity of tributes is but a poor compensation for liberty; and, if the impost is heavy, the republican spirit eases its weight. The worst of governments is that in which the taxes are excessive, and the liberty nearly a nonentity. Do you know the government I allude to?

The Abbé.

It excites the pity of its enemies.

Montesquieu.

With what pleaſure do I contemplate England, the Swiſs leagues, the United Provinces, the Hans Towns, and even Venice! It is a conſideration which gladdens my ſoul, harraſſed by obſerving elſewhere the inſults by which nations are humbled and degraded.

The Abbé.

The more nations ſhall meditate on your principles, the farther will they remove from the abyſs of vices and miſeries into which they are plunged. The ſpirit of the government forms the genius of a nation, a fact that is no longer equivocal.

Montesquieu.

Yes, my friend, and I am conſtantly penetrated by horror, when I reflect on the means by which deſpotiſm is ſupported;—that deſpotiſm which has gradually advanced, and now extends its iron ſceptre over two thirds of the globe. I am aware that infinite combinations are required to form a government ſimilar to that of England; but in ſhort, the perfection of human intelligences, effecting the overthrow of an arbitrary power which is at the ſame time fatal

fatal to itſelf, will trace out the theory of eſſential and general laws.

The Abbé.

You have been the firſt to publiſh this luminous truth, that ſlavery can in no ſenſe be either legitimate or uſeful: and by hiſtory this great truth is more eſpecially inculcated.

Monteſquieu.

Yes, it is there that we find repreſented on a large ſcale the experiments made on human nature, which I love to conſider in theſe great ſocial combinations. I there ſee diſtinctly what I have not yet noticed in my works, namely, that at every time, and in every place, human nature, impelled to action under the guidance of ſeveral individuals, has performed prodigies; but that when reduced to a paſſive ſtate, under the government of one man, it has fallen into degradation and contempt.

The Abbé.

You have followed the impulſion of a genius that has commanded you to ſeek the higheſt poſſible felicity of the whole ſpecies, and of each individual. Thanks to your penetrating eye, this great enterprize has no longer been deemed to favour of raſhneſs: your book is a creation; but I will venture to tell you that it is not free from errors.

Monteſquieu.

Who can be more ſenſible that it is ſo than myſelf? I would give all the world, if I had it, that it had never been printed.

The Abbé.

There are ſeveral objects on which we do not entirely agree. You will excuſe me if I endeavour to inveſtigate theſe in your preſence.

Monteſquieu.

How! are they objects which have a direct influence on the lot of man? Error, on this ſcore, is always a great evil. Speak, ſpeak, the cenſure of a ſagacious and learned friend flatters me more than his approbation.

The Abbé.

Have you not beſtowed your admiration too laviſhly on a nation rendered more celebrated by the miſeries it has heaped on other nations, than by the happineſs it has procured for itſelf? It does not belong to you, either to be the dupe, or to be dazzled by the ideas of aggrandizement and falſe glory, which rendered the Romans deſpots and tyrants at home, oppreſſors abroad, and unjuſt towards all. True philoſophy condemns acts of high injuſtice in nations, as it does thoſe of individuals.

Monteſquieu.

It was my ſole aim to ſpeak of the grandeur

and virtues of the Roman nation. I have generalized the facts of ancient hiſtory, merely to obſerve every political phenomenon. Its vices have paſſed away, while its glory, which may ſerve to elevate our ſouls, ſtill ſubſiſts.

The Abbé.

But why beſtow ſo much praiſe on thoſe who laid waſte the univerſe?

Monteſquieu.

Be under no apprehenſion that they will be imitated by the moderns. I never reflect without ſorrow on the fall of the Roman republic, whether I conſider that the honour of the human ſpecies has ſuffered by it, or that Europe has long felt its baneful effects. The ruin of that vaſt edifice has coſt the human race as much blood as was expended by its conſtruction: and when I lament the fall of ſo ſuperb an empire, I do not juſtify the means by which it was elevated.

The Abbé.

Let us ſhift the object of diſcuſſion. You were the firſt to fall upon the luminous principle of the influence of climate, a problem, the ſolution of which no one had before attempted: but have you not carried this principle too far?

Monteſquieu.

This powerful cauſe certainly exiſts; and I

perceive

perceive that every ſkilful legiſlator has either attempted, according to circumſtances, to derive advantages from the climate, or to combat its defects. Theſe legiſlators have therefore been aware that circumſtances favourable to their views might reſide in the climate. Let me explain myſelf.—This influence ought not unqueſtionably to be carried too far; but the local nature of man has not, I think, been on that account the leſs demonſtrated: and where legiſlations are infected by the vices of the climate, the latter ought, in theſe enlightened days, to be oppoſed by political inſtitutions. Thus ought the legiſlator never to loſe ſight of the ſtate, or rather of the general ſpirit of the nation he is deſirous to form. This ſpirit is the reſult of all the elements of which the nation is compoſed: it is the national character to which no violence muſt be offered; for the citizen is never formed by deſtroying the man, who muſt be reſpected to render the enjoyment of the various benefits of civilization complete.

The Abbé.

You are right: when the laws proceed to open force, their violence loſes its aim; and they can alone ſucceed by taking advantage of opinion, which may be conſidered as the main ſpring of legiſlation. Have you not granted too much to the

the magiſtracies, which have not the power even to compaſs any great good? And have you not laid too great a ſtreſs on the prerogatives of theſe bodies, which have no other than a ſhadow of authority?

Monteſquieu.

I may have done ſo: but till a more ſolid rampart could be found, I was unwilling to cut down the hedge.

The Abbé.

Finally, you have introduced into your work an apology for venality.—Were your ideas on that day perfectly clear.

Monteſquieu.

Quite the contrary. I confeſs myſelf to have been altogether wrong, and conſider elections as far preferable.

The Abbé.

Your error ſeems to have ariſen from this, that your ideas, drawn from juriſprudence rather than from polity, have not ſufficiently accorded with the forms which belong to a popular government.

Monteſquieu.

I confeſs that I had my apprehenſions about them, and that even through my love for humanity.

The

The Abbé.

Your heart needs no juſtification. Whatever you ſay, you never fail to ſet your readers upon thinking: this is the great point; but it does not belong to every one to read you.

Monteſquieu.

Do you mean that as a compliment? So much the worſe for me if all the world does not read me. Every diſcovery whatever is nothing more than a new idea, and every idea may and ſhould be ſignificantly expreſſed by words: if all the world does not read and underſtand me, it is a fault on my ſide which I ſhall take care to correct.

The Abbé.

It was my ſole aim to ſay, becauſe I am perſuaded of it, that all poſſible ſtudy and experience are not ſufficient to authorize excluſive propoſitions on legiſlation.

Monteſquieu.

I have not treated of the twentieth part of the objects I was deſirous to embrace. I ſhall return to the taſk; but, alas! old age advances towards me, and the work is retarded by the great bulk of its materials.

The Abbé.

You have paid your tribute; be contented. It was neceſſary to ſet out by ſpeculations; and

it now remains to ſee the moral generally applied to legiſlation throughout Europe. Every truth has its progreſſion—leave the influence of ages to act. It ſtrikes me that we Frenchmen ſhall alſo be entitled to true glory; and that we ſhall not be deprived of the truly flattering and agreeable hope of obtaining from poſterity that ſentiment of admiration we ourſelves cannot withhold from the ſplendid virtues of the Greeks and Romans. We ſhall have ours; and to this the works of thoſe who reſemble you will contribute not a little. Ancient legiſlations cannot be calculated for modern nations. The diſcovery of the new world, the mariner's compaſs, printing, gunpowder, and the circulation of intelligence by the poſt, all theſe new and heretofore unknown relations require particular views. If the great aim of all civilized ſocieties be public happineſs, you muſt agree with me, that reaſonings ought to give way to facts.

Monteſquieu.

I comprehend you; and, calculating by the wants of nations, which are at this time the ſame, Europe ſhould, at length, compoſe but one and the ſame family. The national characteriſtics, already ſo prodigiouſly changed, ought to be utterly effaced, to the end that man ſhould have nothing left him beſides the love of

peace,

peace, and the ſentiment of equality. The nations of Europe, ſenſible of their incapacity to poſſeſs ſtrong, durable, and peculiar manners, ought to complete the adoption of the ſame uſages, and the ſame ſpirit, refuſing to admit among them a half-civilization, the worſt of all. They ſhould accuſtom themſelves to view with pity and contempt thoſe cruel contentions which ſovereigns wage in the name of patriotiſm. I therefore offer up my prayers, that the European nations, already ſo much united by reciprocal alliances, by commerce, by the arts, by travels, and by an intimate communication of intelligences, may proceed one ſtep further, ſeeing that they have ceaſed to be ſeparated. It is my anxious wiſh that they may ſo blend and incorporate with each other, that their religion, manners, and uſages, may excluſively repreſent the pure and primitive traits of human nature.

The Abbé.

To philoſophy it belongs to infuſe into the ſoul of man theſe new and auſpicious maxims, to complete the civilization of Europe, and to eſtabliſh, in an invariable way, the ideas of juſtice. Reaſon, however, acts but very ſlowly on nations; it is combated; and in theſe days it is beſides dangerous to ſpeak the truth.

Monteſquieu. (agitated.)

It is this that enrages me.—When a citizen is deprived of his liberty for having written or ſpoken in favour of the general intereſt, then has the political corruption reached its higheſt pitch. Every thing is then deemed to belong to the ſovereign, nothing to the country, nothing to humanity, and virtue diſappears altogetner from the kingdom!

The Abbé.

What a misfortune that your hiſtory of Louis XI. has been burned! it is an irretrievable loſs. In deſcribing that grovelling deſpot, it muſt have been your aim to reveal what commonly paſſes in the minds of thoſe whoſe attention is entirely engroſſed by a cruel policy.

Monteſquieu.

I there developed this important truth, a truth which is too little felt, that the deſpotiſm of one ſingle individual cannot poſſibly deſtroy that of ſeveral, which, on the other hand, it eſtabliſhes. I next demonſtrated, that a moderate deſpotiſm is the moſt dangerous of all. To the latter ſubject it was my intention to dedicate an entire work, which would have been both new and important.

The Abbé.

Are you ſtill attacked by the Sorbonne?

Mon-

Monteſquicu.

Yes.—It has been the caſe for theſe two years paſt unremittingly, but with little ſucceſs on the part of my aſſailants.

The Abbé.

If they ſhould harraſs you with any degree of ſucceſs, have recourſe to repriſals. Were I you, I would complete their overthrow. An individual may be pardoned, but a collective body of men never can.

Monteſquieu.

My beſt revenge conſiſts in their publiſhing their abſurdities. To avoid, however, being deafened by the tumult, I retire to my eſtate, leaving caſuiſts and theologians to ſquabble at a diſtance. *(Here they ſpeak low, and ſeparate.)*

OF MACHIAVEL's PRINCE.

WHEN Machiavel wrote his *code* of tyranny, did he not diſcloſe his infernal ſuppleneſs? Did he not reveal to nations the progreſs of deſpotiſm, and the means by which it is ſupported? And may it not be conſidered, in another point of view, as an adroit and ingenious ſtratagem contrived to inſpire the utmoſt horror at arbi-

trary power? Jean-Jacques Rousseau thinks, not unreasonably, that Machiavel, when he described *his Prince*, said to nations: this is the monster who will vex and harrass you, if, through your weakness you give way to so dangerous an authority. Beware of the Prince who shall possess the ideas I bestow on this fantastic being: I have created him to terrify you.

It is a sad lot to be a father under a despotic government: horrible as it is to reflect on, he has equally to dread the virtues and vices of his children, since both conduct them alike to wretchedness. How is he to rejoice at their birth, when they are either to be slaves or unhappy citizens, and when their life is to answer for their courage? This is what Machiavel says, or, at least, what we are enabled distinctly to infer from his writings.

The art of oppressing and overwhelming men is denominated by tyrants the art of governing them; and by these tyrants certain errors useful to themselves have been fallen on. For instance, they grant to a small number of men the enjoyment of the good things of this world, but they reserve to themselves, at the same time, a power over their persons, to be enabled to commit, with impunity, the political crimes which establish authority on the ruins of natural liberty.

liberty. This alſo is to be found in Machiavel.

Tiberius, to ſtrengthen his natural miſtruſt, drew a leſſon from every thing. He was wont to entertain himſelf with a ſpecies of lizard, entitled a *dragon*. This animal was one day devoured by ants: *it amuſed me*, ſaid he, *but while I regret its loſs, I am taught by the accident to dread the multitude, however feeble may be the parts of which it is compoſed.* Is it poſſible to penetrate more effectually into the heart of a tyrant?

The progreſs of any ſtate ought, no doubt, to be ſolemn: it is a maſs which cannot be managed otherwiſe than majeſtically, and with which legerity does not agree. There are old maxims which, when inviolably obſerved, ſtrengthen the baſis of an empire; but ancient regulations muſt ſometimes give way to the movements of policy, becauſe ſtates are phyſical bodies which may ſave themſelves by ſuppleneſs when forcible means can no longer avail them. Machiavel again.

The monarchical government is above every other: this is true; but it can only be when the monarch is great, enlightened, vigilant, and good. This is another opinion of the ſame author; let us develop it.

The error of an isolated man does not impede the progress of human intelligences, and the perfection of society. But when political errors are imbibed by majesty, or by an assemblage of men who enjoy the exclusive right of deciding and pronouncing, then do these become enormous and frightfully overhanging mountains, which come between the light and the happiness of the subjects. The mental acquirements of those intelligent men, whose genius and speculations are devoted to politics, ought therefore to attract the primary attention of administrators of states. By disclosing great and palpable truths, merely for the advantage of mankind, the writer liquidates his debt to his country: for a debt he certainly owes to all the physical and moral benefits of the social state. I am the son of Adam, and all men are my brethren. The investigation of important subjects is therefore incumbent on all.

Deception, one of the artifices employed to subjugate the people, is always dangerous; sooner or later it is seen through, and the deceivers are viewed in their proper light. Every obligation is reciprocal. Now could Plato have expressed himself better? and still this is what Machiavel says.

Plato has observed that a liberty altogether

pure muſt not be beſtowed on a people thirſting for liberty, becauſe they will drink of it to intoxication. This very idea is embraced by Machiavel.

The nation does not aſſiſt at the councils of a deſpot: but becauſe the people are not preſent, do not imagine that they are forgotten.

As ſoon as an authority is ſolidly eſtabliſhed, even ſuppoſing its origin to have been unjuſt, ſince the ſafety of the people is connected with it, it muſt be preſerved. Theſe are a few of the judicious maxims to be found in this politic author, and they lead one to think, &c. &c. &c.

When the nation is utterly corrupted, the certain conſequence of a general neglect of the virtues is a wicked prince. As a venomous plant ſprings up in a moraſs filled with peſtilential vapours, ſo do bad kings ariſe, when informers, ſpies, and ſatellites are multiplied; when each one, for the lucre of gain, is ready to become a jailer, or a hangman; and when, in the midſt of public miſery, adulators are found ready to cry out that every thing goes well. The extreme indigence of the people is the moſt certain indication of the ſpeedy decay and overthrow of the ſtate.

The moral goodneſs of the people is the firmeſt ſupport of a free government. So long

as there ſhall be an abſence of that prodigious power which deſtroys morality and dries up the ſubſtance of the people, the government will be in no danger. But if the extreme opulence of the rich becomes an object of envy; if thoſe who poſſeſs large capitals are the only perſons of conſideration; and if the latter are placed in the enjoyment of every excluſive benefit, then will ſlaves be every where found, ready to ſell their liberty, their honour, and their conſcience. This ariſtocracy of the rich will corrupt ſociety, and the wicked prince will appear: it will be his delight to welter in riches; and the needy part of his ſubjects will be to him a non-entity in exiſtence.

Venality having ſpread itſelf over Rome, the moſt powerful of the citizens uſurped to themſelves the executive power. There is no deſpotiſm more tyrannical than that which ſprings up in a free ſtate; and Rome, therefore, paſſed under the weightieſt of all yokes. Thoſe lofty patricians, who had before made all the monarchs of the eaſt tremble, deſirous to ſnatch the reins of government at home, paid dearly for their attempt againſt the people: the national forces were then turned againſt the nation itſelf.

In imitation of their gladiators, the Romans

murdered each other; and the despotism of their emperors punished the people, who no longer deserved to be free.

All this is to be found in Machiavel, in the author who has been so much descried. I must at the same time, however, confess, that his book must be read from one end to the other, with a constant recollection that irony, which was his favourite figure, abounds in all that he has written.

In the solemn acts of the French nation the famous and ancient expression *ex consensu populi* is introduced, and is rendered by the President Hénaut by the words—*in the assembly of the people*. In this intolerable distortion of the sense we recognize the servile and culpable aim of a courtier. All that concerns the statutes of Charlemagne, the text of the ordonnances, and, more especially, what belongs to the fundamental law of the states general, the basis of the French government, all these objects, I do not call them merely important, but sacred, are more or less falsified in the president's chronological abridgement. Other acts, no less solemn, the irrefragable testimonies of our ancient liberty, are passed silently over.

When the above writer insinuates, that in France the legislative power was vested exclu-

sively

ſively in the chief, without any modification whatever; when we find him conſtantly ſilent as to the right of the council, that of ſuffrage, and that of the national aſſemblies where the authority of perſuaſion was ſtronger than that of command, can we for a moment entertain a doubt of his having at once inſulted truth and our privileges? How is it that his name is almoſt every where reſpected, and that it has not excited the idea of a dangerous flatterer? Becauſe there are very few to be found who are capable of reading political works.

PORTRAIT OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

I PURPOSE to delineate a man indeed extraordinary: his name, in deſcending through ages, has found that of Frederic alone which can be brought in parallel. The reign of the firſt of the Cæſars, of that celebrated uſurper, forms likewiſe the interval between two great hiſtorical epochs, the termination of the Roman republic, and the riſe of the emperors, who were, in the ſequel, the moſt cruel enemies of the liberty of nations.

Çæſar appeared at a time when Rome was in

a condition to recover part of its ancient vigour; it ſtill poſſeſſed virtuous men enow to revive it; but the patriciate was the gangrene of the republic, and had attacked the ſenate itſelf.—While the empire was extending its dominion abroad, the vices of the citizens encreaſed in ſtrength and haſtened its deſtruction. A corrupt republic is ſuch for ever, and muſt inevitably periſh. After the dictatorſhip of Sylla, the ſovereignty was a dreadful but eaſy conqueſt, held out to the man who ſhould be bold enough to make the attack.

Several had attempted it. Firſt, Lepidus; but the imbecillity of his character ruined his infant ſchemes. Catiline poſſeſſed only the audacity of an abandoned villain, who ſets ſhame and puniſhment at defiance. Cicero, a man of virtue and eloquence, and a ſtaunch republican, defeated, by his firmneſs and prudence, the conſpiracy, but he delayed only a few moments the fall of liberty.

Pompey, though endued with rare qualities, wanted reſolution and firmneſs; orrather his ambition was too ſlow. He aſpired to have the ſovereign power decreed to him by the ſuffrages of the people, but he could not prevail with himſelf to uſurp it. Cæſar, uniting greatneſs of deſign with extent of genius, ſeemed deſtin-

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ed to the authority, which he attained by acting a criminal part, ſince he trampled upon the rights of his country, and, with a rebellious hand, impoſed the chains of ſervitude. His conqueſts in Gaul had attached to him a formidable army; and the Romans ſaw too late, that their moſt imminent danger conſiſted in committing veteran legions to a ſingle man. The ſenate from this time (to preſerve its authority) together with Cicero, Cato, and all who ſtill breathed the true Roman ſpirit, ſided with Pompey.

The character of Cæſar had never been a feigned one. He ſhowed from his youth an elevated ſoul, ſuperior to fear. Married when a ſtripling, he had not reached man's eſtate when he braved the will of Sylla. That proſcriber, having required that he ſhould repudiate Cornelia, daughter of Cinna, who had recalled Marius to Italy and headed his party after his death, met a refuſal which neither inſinuations, intreaties, nor menaces could change. When we reflect that Sylla had only to write the name of Cæſar in the liſt of proſcription, to puniſh this refuſal, we are aſtoniſhed at the reſiſtance of the latter.

But Cæſar knew not how to bend. He left Rome to travel in Greece and Aſia. In one of

his paſſages by ſea, he was taken by pirates; but he addreſſed them as their maſter, rather than as their priſoner, and threatened to have them crucified. After being redeemed, he armed ſome veſſels, attacked the pirates in their harbours, regained his ranſom with intereſt, and accompliſhed his menace. Traits ſuch as theſe, preſage the firmneſs of his courage; and he joined to them in the ſequel, what he had not yet attained, prudence, and a fluency of ſpeech.

It would ſeem that early and conſtantly he reſolved to gain with the people a credit which he ever regarded as alone capable of advancing him to greatneſs. Urged by this determination, he was affable and courteous to all; he pleaded the cauſe of the meaneſt of the citizens; and after having gratuitouſly beſtowed his eloquence, he gave ſumptuous entertainments at his houſe. He had ſpent his patrimony, and contracted a debt of three hundred thouſand crowns, before he was inveſted with any public poſt.

It was in the midſt of this diſſipation, affecting, at the ſame time, a careleſs air, that he brought out the images of his uncle Marius, and that he hung up the repreſentations of his victories, which no perſon had dared to do ſince

Sylla. Thus he enchanted the people, and laid the foundations of his future power, while he gave offence to the grave ſenators, the partizans of the ariſtocratic government. An incident diſplays his dexterity: when elected prætor, he wiſhed, ſuitably to his policy, to obtain an act for the diſtribution of lands among the poor citizens; the patrician families ſtrenuouſly oppoſed it, and drove him away by an armed force. His project failed; but, two days after, he was able to quiet the inſurgents, and entered the ſenate, reſtored to his full rights.

The eloquence with which he was endued by nature, never forſook him. To a perſuaſive diction he joined a lively action and geſtures full of grace; the language of genius, laconic and ſententious, was familiar to him.

When high prieſt and privy to the myſteries of the good goddeſs, he at once divorced and juſtified his wife, by ſaying, "ſhe is free of crime, but ſhe ought not even to be ſuſpected of it."

During the inveſtigation of Catiline's conſpiracy, Cicero having diſcovered ſome ſuſpicious circumſtances againſt Cæſar, paſſed by them unnoticed. He afterwards confeſſed that, ſeeing his head ſo finely frizzled that he durſt not ſcratch it but with the ends of *his* fingers, for fear of diſcompoſing its ſymmetry, he could not

imagine

imagine it contained views of ſuch high importance. Thus Cæſar affected to appear a giddy coxcomb only, to conceal his ambition.

It was then cuſtomary at Rome to ſend into the provinces thoſe who had ſerved the office of prætor. Spain fell to Cæſar: it was there that he wept at the ſight of a ſtatue of Alexander; and theſe tears proclaimed the ſoul of a conqueror. Cæſar quickly ſubdued Celtiberia and Luſitania; and Rome had on that coaſt no limits but the ocean. He returned to Rome at the time when the conſuls were to be named, and, more deſirous of that dignity than of the honours of a triumph, he entered the city to ſolicit it. A ſtroke of the moſt maſterly policy ſecured to him in a few days the ſucceſs of his vaſt deſigns.

The city was divided in attachment between Craſſus and Pompey, who were, conſequently, enemies. Cæſar undertook to reconcile them; he repreſented that their oppoſition was mutually hurtful, and that they could each obtain great power without aſpiring to ſovereignty.—He ſucceeded in perſuading them, and by conciliating ſuch divided intereſts, he cruſhed with the ſame blow, Cato and other ſtern republicans, whom he either dreaded or could not love. He in the event rendered his election infallible, be-

cauſe

caufe he came in for an equal fhare himfelf of the friendfhip he had created between Craffus and Pompey: they labored in concert to obtain for him the confulfhip. Cæfar had juftly regarded it as the fureft ladder for mounting to the eminence to which he afpired.

The conful acted like a tribune, and the chief of the fenate appeared a plebeian. Whatever might favor or flatter the popular power, entered into the fecret plan of Cæfar. He perfuaded Craffus and Pompey that the real power refided in the people; and hence it was that the forefight, the probity, and the vehemence of Cato, together with the patriotifm of many other fenators, could not withftand an influence fo obtained. The favour of the people, long ago beftowed, was now converted into gratitude, into idolatry. Every thing was eafy to Cæfar, and he needed only to advance; he afked, and he obtained the government of Gaul, and the fame legions for the fpace of ten years. In the plan which he had premeditated, the exercife of thefe imprudent grants was deftined, undoubtedly, againft thofe who conferred them.

Once placed at the head of the legions, whatever might be the turn of events, Cæfar could not do other than fucceed. Roman liberty floated between two rocks equally dangerous; if

if Pompey, more daring, had attempted to anticipate Cæſar and to cruſh freedom, Cæſar would have been called to defend the republic, and, after expelling his rival, would have occupied the ſame poſt of deſpotiſm. What will always be moſt difficult in every government, is to find the proper ſtation for the military body, and to give it a counterpoiſe without cramping its force*.

From

* The ſenate, foreſeeing that Julius Cæſar would be raiſed to the conſulſhip, had reſolved to confer on the conſuls very contemptible departments; but already the moſt powerful citizens had learnt to trample under foot (by the aid of the tribunes, whom they could attach to their intereſt) all that the civil wars had left of the ancient laws. The conſuls Gabinius and Piſo, obtained by a decree, the one the province of Syria, and the other that of Macedon. They owed their ſucceſs to their having gained over the tribune, Clodius, who at the ſame time exacted a promiſe, that they would not oppoſe during their conſulſhip the baniſhment of Cicero his capital enemy. No ſooner was he made conſul, than he gained over the Vatinius; he obtained by the conſent of the people Ciſalpine Gaul,. and Illyria, to be governed at firſt, for five years, by an army compoſed of three legions. This was totally contrary to the ancient laws, ſince the pro-conſulſhip was not to laſt above a year, and ſince it was hardly cuſtomary to grant the pro-conſuls more than two legions. The artful Cæſar, profiting by the reſemblance of names, got added to his government, that of Tranſalpine Gaul: Ciſalpine Gaul comprehended the country extending from the Rubicon, a ſmall ſtream in modern Romania, as far as the Alps.— Rome kept on foot conſiderable forces in that provinee, to cover Italy from the invaſions of the barbarous nations, and to over-awe the Gauls themſelves. But to ſecure the metropolis againſt the danger

From that moment, Cæſar wore no longer the frizled head that had deceived Cicero; he aſſumed a military air, and diſplayed in Gaul thoſe great talents for war which we ſtill admire. In no quality was he inferior to the commanders who have either preceded or followed him; and he excelled them all in the quick diſcernment of occaſions for action, and in the difficult art of improving incidents.

He wrote his *Commentaries* with preciſion and clearneſs, in an inſtructive ſtile, and ſo utterly devoid of all oſtentation, that the pen which deſcribes his warlike operations ſeems not to have belonged to the hand which directed them. The

danger of theſe troops, the ſenate had framed the celebrated *ſenatus-conſultum*, which devoted to the infernal gods whoever, with a legion or a cohort, ſhould paſs the Rubicon. The government entruſted to Cæſar was, therefore, a moſt important one: to it was joined another ſtill more conſiderable, that of Tranſalpine Gaul, which comprehended the ſouth of France. Thus Cæſar, by his poſition, could for many years make war upon all the nations he choſe, ſo that his ſoldiers became habituated to him, grew old under his command, and were ſubdued by him no leſs than the barbarians. Without the government of Tranſalpine Gaul, Cæſar could never have corrupted his ſoldiers, nor adorned his name by ſo many victories; and if he had not obtained Ciſalpine Gaul, Pompey might eaſily have ſtopt his paſſage over the Alps. The ſame terror which Hannibal carried to Rome after the battle of Cannæ, was ſpread by Cæſar when he paſſed the Rubicon; Pompey could only fly or ſubmit; he quitted Rome, left the public treaſure, and could no where retard the conqueror.

marvellous

marvellous difappears. After having conquered Gaul, he won the friendfhip of the vanquifhed people; ever beloved by his troops he called them fellow-foldiers, *commilitones*, and was no lefs their companion than their leader*.

This

* What empire had not Cæfar over his foldiers! He owed it to the fuperiority of his genius, to that confidence which he had afpired in attaching them to the ties of military difcipline, as the fureft pledge of victory. Certain Spaniards, vanquifhed by his arms, having retired into an ifland at afhort diftance from the main land, Cæfar, who had no veffels, could not purfue them; he conftructed with all fpeed a few light boats, to tranfport into the ifland a fmall body of troops. Some of the foldiers were difembarked upon a rock, from whence they could advance againft the enemy, and the centurion who commanded the detachment, reckoned upon being able either to fupport or to cover them as occafion fhould require; but having been deceived in his plan by the ebb-tide, which carried off his bark, he left his foldiers, who were but few in number, expofed to the mercy of the barbarians; they were all killed except one named *Scæva*. This valiant foldier, after fighting long, leapt into the fea, though wounded, and fwam afhore: Cæfar, who had been a witnefs of the whole tranfaction, thought that Scæva was come to afk a reward; he was much furprifed at feeing him fall on his knees and beg pardon for being without his arms, and particularly *his buckler*. It was a fubject of admiration to Cæfar, to find in a foldier fo much refpect for difcipline joined to fo much bravery. He raifed him to a diftinguifhed rank.

Such foldiers could not fail to compofe a formidable army; but it was neverthelefs fubmiffive, or at leaft it returned quickly to duty after trying its ftrength. The following is an example: The army which Cæfar got ready to lead into Africa, to reduce the remains of Pompey's party, having mutinied againft him, demanded in a feditious manner a difcharge, and the rewards which he had promifed

This genius, vaſt, and at the ſame time verſatile, provided for every event, and ſeemed not deeply occupied with all theſe great objects. In the midſt of three hundred reſtleſs nations, which

miſed. The *tenth legion* eſpecially, which enjoyed Cæſar's peculiar eſteem, diſtinguiſhed itſelf in this revolt, and all the troops proceeded to ſuch audacity as to march ſtraight to Rome: there they prepared to obtain by force what formed the object of their inſolent clamors. Cæſar was apprehenſive for the city, but did not ſhut himſelf up; after diſtributing, to guard the gates, the faithful troops which ſtill adhered to him, he went out to the revolters encamped in the field of Mars, nor could the entreaties and councils of his alarmed friends prevail with him to deſiſt: he boldly aſcended his tribunal, and, with a threatning tone of voice, aſked the ſoldiers what brought them thither, and what were their claims. Diſconcerted by this firſt proceeding, ſo firm and ſo lofty, the mutineers durſt only mention the rewards the delay of which had excited their murmurs; they contented themſelves with repreſenting that, broken with fatigue, and exhauſted by their loſs of blood ſhed in ſo many battles, they well merited their diſcharge. *I give it you*, replied Cæſar, without heſitating one moment; *go: when I have triumphed with other troops, I ſhall not neglect to acquit the promiſes which I have made to you.*

Theſe few words were a clap of thunder to the revolters; they did not expect ſo rapid a deciſion, nor to find Cæſar grant their diſmiſſion at the time he moſt needed their ſervices: the promiſe of recompenſe confounded them; they perceived the ſhame that awaited them, if, after bearing the burden, and undergoing all the dangers of ſo many important wars, they left to others the honor of the triumph: ſtunned, without being ſubdued, they heſitated to believe that Cæſar would fulfil his menace, and conſent to forego their ſervices. The dictator, firmly laconic, opened not his mouth but to addreſs the mutineers and take leave of them by employing the

which rallied with ſpirit when they were thought to be cruſhed, Rome, and the tranſactions there, were preſent to his view. Although at a diſtance, he was himſelf the principal mover. Is it not wonderful to behold him arrive from the heart of the Belgic territories to ſpend the winter on the banks of the Po, to attract to himſelf all that Rome could boaſt of grandeur and magnificence, and to exhibit the ſpectacle of an hundred and twenty *faſces* at its gates?

When he paſſed the Rubicon, not like a raſh adventurer, but a conſiderate warrior, he was accompanied only by five thouſand foot, and three hundred horſe. The reſt of his forces were ſtill beyond the Alps; but he had ſkilfully calculated on the confuſion which ſurpriſe would produce, and on the terror which would prevail where there was neither concord nor

the word *Quirites* (citizens) becauſe he no longer conſidered them on the footing of ſoldiers. That word completely humbled and ſubdued them; they cried out they were *ſoldiers*, they proteſted their valor, which a moment had beguiled, and the ſincerity of their repentance; they entreated to be led with Cæſar into Africa, promiſing to conquer their enemies, however numerous; they preſented themſelves even to be decimated, if this was neceſſary, to appeaſe Cæſar. Cæſar anſwered, that he was unwilling to ſhed their blood, but that ſoldiers, ſtill full of vigor, who refuſed to obey their general, deſerved only to be caſhiered. At laſt, overcome by their ſupplications, he was pleaſed to relent, and to grant them, as a favor, the honor of marching under his banners.

 virtue;

virtue; he knew the irreſolution of Pompey, never firm to the ſame plan. Nor was he deceived; conſternation preceded his march, combated for him as he had foreſeen, and, in ſixty days, rendered him maſter of Italy.

This deciſive event ought, on reflection, no longer to ſurpriſe. In the firſt ages of Rome, the ſoldier never quitted Italy. The war was uſually terminated in a ſingle campaign, and each winter he reviſited his home. But when the Romans puſhed their victories beyond the Alps and the ſeas, the ſoldier, removed from Rome many years, loſt ſight of the republic, and gradually became accuſtomed to look up to his general, and to repoſe on him all his hopes. Public ſpirit was vaniſhed. Every man adhered to Marius, or to Sylla, to Cæſar, or to Pompey.

Pompey eſcaped from the conqueror, who did not commit the blunder into which another would have fallen, of purſuing beyond ſea; he knew that Pompey would be vanquiſhed by his own negligence. In reality, that unhappy general, whoſe naval forces were prodigious, did not not block up his paſſage, becauſe he expected it would not be attempted until the ſpring. Cæſar drew him to Pharſalia, where he gained the ever famous battle which decided the fate of the Romans. He followed Pompey cloſe

close to Egypt. He owed this victory to his knowledge of the new and effeminate Romans, come from the games or circusses of Greece, when he ordered his soldiers to *strike them on the face*. The taking of Pompey alive would have brought him into an alternative extremely difficult. The crime of Ptolemy saved him from that painful dilemma, and fortune, which had rendered to him so many signal services, crowned its favours by an incident the most seasonable to the glory and elevation of Cæsar. He relaxed from his martial toils by winning Cleopatra, and he dreaded not new enemies, provided he could place on the throne a woman whom he loved. Voluptuous in the city, and frugal in the camp, he passed with equal ease from sensuality to the hardy life of a soldier.

Why did this great man aspire to crush the liberty of his country? Was he actuated by two different souls? Ambition corrupted the finest genius of the universe; but this passion once satiated, Cæsar resumed all his natural virtues. When he was dictator, he appeared to deserve a world. Clemency paced before him, it spake by his mouth, it silenced vengeance, and even policy. He abstained from blood, collected tenderly all that victory had spared, and while the fury of the first proscriptions seemed to autho-

rize rigor, and while Rome and the univerſe would have beheld it exerciſed without ſurpriſe, the clement Cæſar would not allow to be fixed on the gates thoſe execrable liſts which procured to Marius and Sylla the appellation of monſters, and which ſully the memory of Auguſtus. He pardoned two poets who had compoſed ſevere ſatires againſt him; and, conſidering the circumſtances of the times, and the ſolicitude he bore for his renown, this was not the leaſt token of his generoſity.

Not but he was aware of the dangers which threatened his perſon, and of the eaſy means to avert them; but he abhorred precautionary murders; he choſe rather to hazard his life than to blaſt it by committing cruelties. In the liſt of thoſe who conſpired againſt him, there appeared, in the ſequel, the names of thoſe alone whom he had pardoned. In theſe traits of character who ſees not a being ſuperior to the hero,—the man of magnanimity? He was not ignorant of the machinations on foot againſt his life; his courtiers propoſed that he ſhould employ guards about his perſon. What a noble and bold philoſophy dictated this reply; *it is better to die at once than to watch continually againſt death.*

How can it be conceived that he who was

endued with ſuch acute penetration, and ſuch extenſive knowledge, inveſted with the ſovereign power over a nation that held the empire of the world, ſhould have entertained a fooliſh wiſh for royalty, againſt which the people, though ſubjected, declared always in a decided manner; that he ſhould have deſired to encircle his forehead with a *diadem*, and bear the name of *king*? Is there a magic ſound in that name? Of what conſequence was the title when he enjoyed a ſupreme power? How could a mind ſo enlightened be ambitious for a name odious at Rome, and common to a thouſand ſovereigns, while he had one peculiar to himſelf which placed him with dignity at the head of the firſt people of the univerſe? This name of king recalled the memory of the Tarquins, and every eye turned upon Brutus, as if to declare, that to his name belonged the privilege of exterminating the kings of Rome. Brutus was thus impelled, by the public wiſh, to ſtab Cæſar; and this bloody plot was executed on that very day when he expected to receive from the ſenate the title of *king*, and the liberty of wearing the *crown* in the provinces, out of Rome and Italy.

Thus was the great Cæſar ſacrificed to a whim which forms a contraſt with the loftineſs

of

of his character. Nothing can better display how much ambition blinds superior geniuses: the passion of Alexander was to be deified after his death, and his wish was not accomplished; the passion of Cæsar was to be called *king*, and he was punished with twenty-three strokes of the dagger.

The conspiracy of Brutus presented to the senate an opportunity of re-establishing liberty. Without doubt it ought, consistently with the most usual rules of prudence, to have seconded Brutus and Cassius, and, proceeding a step farther, to have put Antony to death, stifled the hopes of the young Octavius, and proscribed the memory of Cæsar. Instead of acting this part, the senate committed to Octavius the charge of making war against Antony, without seeming to comprehend that this diversion would weaken the republic, and without forseeing that when once Octavius should have nothing to fear from Antony, he would be reconciled to his antagonist, to the end, that by their united force they might crush Brutus and Cassius, their true enemies.

The farther a person is removed from the sovereignty, the more ardent is the desire to attain it when the road opens suddenly to his ambitious view. Cæsar was descended from a private house, and, in spite of every obstacle, rose to

be perpetual dictator. Oppofition inflamed both his courage and his policy: and what talents were required to conftrain his equals to become his fubjects! In this light, no man was comparable to Cæfar, but Cromwell. The latter dethroned his king, the former deftroyed the majefty of the Roman people: Cæfar was killed, and deferved his fate; Cromwell reigned, and ftill leaves in a ftate of indecifion the opinion of the friend of public and national liberty.

The great event of the extinction of Cæfar arrefts our attention; for who would have thought that the death of one man could have had fuch a remarkable influence on fo vaft a portion of the globe? Was Brutus an affaffin or an avenger? His fixt principles, wholly founded on the intereft of the republic, taught him to hefitate not preferring the general good of his country to every other intereft; it dictated to him that the public claimed the higheft regard, and that the enemy of liberty is the enemy of mankind. The crowned monfters who fat on the throne which Cæfar had erected, and even confolidated, prove that Brutus acted well; happy could he have killed tyranny in ftabbing the tyrant! But tyranny fubfifted: a generation of emperors would have required a generation of Brutuffes. Though nearly all thefe tyrants

were

were hurled from the bloody throne they filled, ſtill no one of them was ſacrificed by the hand of patriotiſm. That long ſucceſſion of ferocious and ſtupid tyrants, the diſgrace of humanity, exhibits only the capricious work of a lawleſs military force. A crime raiſed them to the throne, a crime forced them to deſcend from it.

Cæſar profaned that ſword and that genius which had rendered him maſter of the nation and the ſenate; but the firſt ſteps he advanced in the career of ambition perhaps deprived him of the power of ſtopping. Let him who loves true glory ſhudder at this reflection, and dread the honor of every dictatorſhip, even the moſt temporary! An accomplice in his youth of all the conſpiracies that were formed at Rome, Cæſar had the art of conſtantly eſcaping detection, though always ſuſpected: if he had entered into the condition of ſenator, the conſul and the tribunes of the people might have ſcrutinized his conduct; and this motive, perhaps, urged him to commit a crime againſt his country, and to cauſe himſelf to be nominated perpetual dictator. The whole nation, exhauſted by the continuance, the rapid ſucceſſion, and the cruelty of the civil wars, ſaw no expedient left but to ſubmit to an abſolute maſter, that is, to one of its ſeditious citizens whoſe courage

and dexterity had ſubdued the greateſt number of individuals. Cæſar ſubjugated Rome to veil his firſt errors; he abſolutely changed its deſtiny, and, alas! for ages. The greatneſs of the Romans conſiſted heretofore in the love of liberty; it now ſunk into the ſervitude which ſeeks to approach the throne, as the only road to dignity, to riches, and to favor. Thus public ſpirit either degenerates or improves, and admits no middle ſtation. The whole art of the legiſlator, therefore, conſiſts in keeping alive this ſacred flame, the extinction of which he ought never to allow.

Cæſar, who, in forming the dynaſty of the Roman emperors, founded the moſt grievous and ſhocking deſpotiſm, fully merited death; and his memory, notwithſtanding his ſuperior genius, muſt be eternally odious to every man whoſe ſoul glows with the love of liberty and of his country, or nouriſhes the ſlighteſt regard for the dignity of human nature.

What did the world behold after Cæſar had overpowered the ſenate? A whining tyrant under the name of Auguſtus, and ſhortly after the reign of a Tiberius. The government quickly became deſpotical, and nearly ſimilar to that which is now eſtabliſhed in Turkey. A licentious military force elected and depoſed at will.

will. The meanneſs and ſubmiſſion of the ſenate were at the loweſt pitch. The only ſhadow of authority which it ſtill retained, was exerciſed in revenging upon the people the inſults and vexations it received from the emperors. Finally, all the ſprings of government being deſtroyed, the empire was divided, fell in pieces, and became the prey of the firſt barbarians who deigned to attack it.

The obſerving eye, in recurring to cauſes, will diſcover the ruin of the Roman empire in the ſingle but egregious fault of Romulus, the admiſſion of hereditary nobility, and the founding of a patriciate, which divided the republic into two orders. The nobles and patricians could alone aſpire to the offices of truſt; the ſenators, who held their place for life, could be drawn from that body alone; and, as if they apprehended their power to be ſtill inſufficient, the patricians enjoyed, excluſively, the honors of the prieſthood, and the reſt of the people bore the name of plebeians. It was impoſſible but that the patricians, filling, excluſively as they did, all the charges of the ſtate, forming the ſenate, and retaining in their hands the abſolute control of religion and the auguries, means ſo efficacious in every ſuperſtitious nation, ſhould continually endeavour to augment their

their power. The exclusive pretensions of this privileged order excited perpetual divisions, which were insensibly converted to the disadvantage of the people, notwithstanding their physical preponderance. The conquests of the Romans only increased the power of the nobles, and the subjection of the plebeians; lastly, when riches, those spoils of the world, had introduced with them luxury and corruption, patricians were found so powerful as to overwhelm the senate itself, and to annihilate its liberty. It was, therefore, the aristocracy which undermined and destroyed the proud government of Rome.

Such, in a few words, is the history of that famous republic; and ought it not to convey to us instruction? In an age when the minds of all men are turned to the science of government; at this moment when celebrated writers have pretended to show the advantages of an upper house, consisting of nobles and the grandees of the court; when there are still persons, who, for want of historical information, censure the wise and profound decree which abolishes hereditary nobility in France, I have thought it not unprofitable to demonstrate that this senate which some would establish, and this distinction of ranks which some would preserve, were, at all

all times, ſources of trouble in the Roman republic, and produced, finally, its ſubjugation.

OF GREAT CHARACTERS, OR CATO THE CENSOR; AND CATO OF UTICA.

IN political affairs, it is the character rather than the ſpirit which predominates. Without the glory of arms, great characters have even obtained celebrity, and eſſentially ſerved their country. Each Cato was an example of this: both were inflexible, incapable of being corrupted, and intrepid. Cato the cenſor, the conſtant accuſer of the grandees of Rome, was not to be impeded in his courſe by any conſideration, and evinced his love for the public weal, and his hatred of the violation of the written laws. He perſecuted vicious men; and, equally attentive to public affairs, never addreſſed the ſenate on ſubjects the leaſt material, without winding up his opinion by theſe words: *and it ſtrikes me, that the deſtruction of Carthage is connected with this meaſure.* Cato of Utica preferred before every other conſideration juſtice and the republic, and entertained no hatred againſt men, but ſimply againſt the vices which ſapped the conſtitution of the ſtate.

It was Cato, who, at fourteen years of age, being carried by his preceptor to Sylla's houſe, and being there a witneſs to the tyranny which was exerciſed over his fellow citizens, was aſtoniſhed at this tyrant's not being killed, and aſked for a ſword to ſtab him. *I* am not afraid of him, added he.

Strong in his virtue, he aſpired to no dignity, nor did he make intereſt for any, till he thought it neceſſary for the public good. Always like himſelf, he divined the character of Cæſar, and followed him ſtep by ſtep into futurity with ſuch aſtoniſhing preciſion, that, after the event, it was ſaid, he had not foreſeen any thing, but was the confident of Cæſar's ſecrets.

He was no follower of Pompey, but was one of his party, becauſe it embraced the ſhadow of liberty. After the rout of Pharſalia, he endeavoured to revive the republic even from its ruins; he ſhut himſelf up in the city of Utica, but as ſoon as he heard of the defeat of Scipio, he ſaw no ſalvation for his country, and provided for the ſafety of all the Romans who had followed his fortunes; and when the laſt of his friends had embarked, he ſtabbed himſelf, and expired, after having torn away the dreſſings that had been put upon his wound.

These two great characters stemmed the torrent of the iniquities with which Rome was contaminated. Cato of Utica would have been a general worthy to oppose to Cæsar: he persuaded Pompey not to hazard a battle; for this was the only resource of his enemy, whom he would have ruined by protracting time. He had given the same advice to Scipio. When we reflect that a series of the greatest political events depended on this counsel, we cannot help regretting that Cato obtained no better a hearing. The Roman republic would not have fallen so wretchedly, and the Roman empire would, perhaps, be standing at this day.

And was it not from the reputation of virtue enjoyed by that other great character called Brutus, that the conspiracy against Cæsar borrowed all its force and confidence? In the event Brutus threw himself on his sword, while his wife, worthy of such a husband, swallowed live coals, that she might not survive his death, and the ruin of her country.

And did not Cromwell and Richlieu, and that second Richlieu the marquis de Pombal, owe every thing great that they atchieved to the firmness of their character? We have had many men endued with rare qualities, but firmness

neſs of character has been the deſideratum of almoſt all our ſtateſmen.

A determined character! This is far more uncommon among the French than the man of genius. Why ſo?——There are things which we feel ſo ſtrongly, that we diſdain to expreſs them.

Virtue acquires firmneſs from a ſenſe of her own dignity, but great fortitude is neceſſary beſides. We cannot deny here (for what is not done in our days to diſcourage every effort of virtue!) that attempts are made to rob her even of her triumph, by pretending to believe in no ſuch thing: her generoſity, her greatneſs of ſoul, her ſacrifices, every thing in a word is called in queſtion. A man behaves like a hero, and yet ſervile ideas, intereſted views, and ſlaviſh ſentiments are attributed to him, becauſe thoſe who judge him are ſlaves, and entirely unacquainted with virtue. It is a misfortune to be born among men of ſuch a ſtamp; but neverthleſs, amid all the degradation of modern manners, we ſtill poſſeſs a multitude of virtuous magiſtrates whoſe fortitude we cannot chuſe but admire. Their patriotic voice ſeconds that of our writers, and effectually forms a repreſentative body, that may be compared to the Chineſe

 mandarines,

mandarines, ſo much extolled in the hiſtory of that vaſt empire.

OF THE POLICY OF AUGUSTUS.

AS ſoon as the half of a nation can be brought to take up arms againſt the other half, the fate of the empire may be decided in one day. Thus the battles of Actium and Boſworth determined in Europe the fortunes of Rome and of England; and thus Guiſe was on the point of producing the greateſt of revolutions in France.

But to reduce the great under the power of a houſe which moſt of them regarded ſome time before as only on a footing with theirs; to ſubject all the different ranks of citizens, and this by means of laws, with the approbation of the larger part of the nation, and at leaſt, with the reſpectful and ſilent conſent of the other part; this undoubtedly muſt be a ſtroke of policy reſulting from circumſtances, or it muſt be the work of great ſtateſmen, who, like Auguſtus or Richelieu, knew what they may ſafely attempt, and divine what a nation will bear without danger to itſelf, or to him who ſhall ſtrike ſo daring a blow.

Auguſtus was actuated by the moſt refined and profound policy. After rendering himſelf maſter of the empire, he fully underſtood that it was his intereſt to retain the command of the army; but he was aware that this engine might recoil upon himſelf, if the legions collected together ſhould acquire an idea of their own ſtrength, and ſhould find a General capable of gaining their affections.

What did Auguſtus do? He declared, with a ſeeming moderation, that the empire was ſufficiently extended, and that conſequently every idea of an offenſive war ought to be relinquiſhed. Nothing was required, according to him, but to guard the frontiers againſt the incurſions of barbarians. In that ſervice, he employed thoſe ancient, thoſe formidable legions, which were now diſperſed in ſmall detachments, along immenſe frontiers.

The army, being thus divided, was always under his control. He prevented its combination, and ſtifled the genius of its commanders, by precluding all opportunity of cultivating and diſplaying it, ſince military ſkill could in future merely conſiſt in reſtraining undiſciplined multitudes from paſſing great rivers, and in defending impregnable fortreſſes againſt barbarians abſolutely ignorant of the art of war.

All the citizens had been obliged to become ſoldiers during the ſixty years of the civil wars. Auguſtus enacted a law, of a ſpirit altogether contrary, namely, that no perſon ſhould be permitted to embrace the military profeſſion, unleſs for the defence of the frontiers, or to enter into the guards of Cæſar. He particularly favoured agriculture, which attached his ſubjects to the waſte lands, and taught them to procure ſubſiſtence without bearing arms. The people derived great advantages from devoting themſelves to huſbandry, which was the principal object that fixed the attention of Auguſtus when he had acquired the poſſeſſion of the empire. By this conduct, he encouraged marriage and population; he baniſhed warlike and ſeditious ideas, by ſecuring the tranquility of the empire; he became, by his wiſe and prudent meaſures, the true maſter of Rome; and univerſal peace made him a deſpot in the palace of the Cæſars

Although Auguſtus be boaſted to have revived in Italy the golden age, it is reaſonable to preſume, that he permitted the people to taſte the ſweets and the pleaſures which are the fruits of peace and abundance, the better only to extinguiſh in individuals every raſh and dangerous ſpirit of enterprize. He employed the

charms

charms and improvements of agriculture, continual diverſions, and multiplied ſpectacles for the populace, as many ſovereigns have ſince done, merely to captivate the nation, and fix the public attention on agreeable or trifling objects.

Thoſe who cultivate their eſtates, who inhabit handſome villas or opulent cities, think not of civil war. Quiet enjoyment renders men ſober, and readily convinces them, that it is much eaſier for them to improve their property and augment their riches by peace, than by a ruinous and uncertain war.

This it was that eſtabliſhed on a firm baſis the power of Auguſtus, that deſtroyed all equality between him and the reſt of the nobility, and that will conſolidate every authority, which, not paſſing the bounds of moderation, will thus become the ſtronger and the more reſpected.

It is by attaching men to cultivation and plenty, that the ſovereignty will enjoy all its plenitude, and that a nation will be at once ſubmiſſive and peaceable. This is what Tacitus ſo well depicts; *Cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit:* this is what Paterculus expreſſes; *Certa cuique rerum ſuarum poſſeſſio.*

Eædem magiſtratuum vocabulæ, ſays Tacitus: the people are led by names. The titles of an-

 cient

cient offices ſhould be retained. The people never examine things ſo deeply, as to perceive the alterations introduced, if the denominations be not changed.

Tiberius, who, under the pretext of treaſon againſt the ſtate, and with the uſual forms of juſtice, put to death the deſcendants of the patricians who had ſubmitted to the yoke of Cæſar, cauſed no diſcontent among the Roman people. They confined themſelves to the obſervation, that *the ſenate* had pronounced ſentence according to the law. Caligula, diſregarding the law, ſimply commanded the guards to aſſaſſinate ſuch of the patricians as had diſpleaſed him. Tiberius died peaceably, and Caligula was killed by a captain of the prætorian bands, while he was delivering to him the counter-ſign of the day.

They are unſkilful deſpots who determine to employ a military force without a pretext of law.

OF THE LIMITS OF AN EMPIRE.

OF what magnitude is the ſtate the beſt calculated to contribute to the ſum of public happineſs? Empires of a vaſt extent are ſubject to diſmemberment, while others fortunately confined

fined within more narrow limits, are only the more vigorous and robuſt.

Rome was doomed to fall beneath the weight of its greatneſs; Spain, with its colonies, is exhauſted; and the Ruſſian empire, though a country of ſlaves, will not ſtand a century and an half on its enormous baſis. England has loſt her colonies; and time, independently of every other motive, would have ſufficed to bring about a revolution. But a ſmall ſtate is always leſs happy in proportion than a great one. The tall trees of the foreſt abſorb the juices of the earth to feed their ſpreading branches, while ſhrubs of humbler growth wither and decay.

The greateſt political phenomenon that exiſts is the baſis of the Chineſe government. The emperor, it is ſaid, has power of life and death over two hundred millions of inhabitants. What mighty central force can put ſo vaſt a machine in motion? 'Tis an abuſe of words; this depotiſm, however virtuous, does not exiſt as we are taught to believe; the thing is impoſſible. Two hundred millions of men do not obey a ſingle man excluſively; nor can I believe in the virtues of a people thus governed: they muſt be indolent, ſtupid, void of all feeling, or debaſed by ſuperſtition, to adhere everlaſtingly to the ſame

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ſame cuſtoms and manners; it is a nation *ſui generis*.

But fourteen thouſand lettered mandarines compoſe the inſtructing part; and as they are all at one and the ſame time profeſſors of morality, governors of towns, and members of the tribunals of juſtice, I can conceive that it is this enlightened body which averts the evils of deſpotiſm. Beſides, the arbitrary authority of the emperor muſt be, and is, in reality loſt, in the immenſe number of his ſubjects. He only retains the power of conſolidating, by wiſdom and juſtice, the diſtant members of this enormous political body: let us proceed.

A ſingle acre of land ſown with rice, will ſupport eight Chineſe peaſants; while in Europe it requires four acres of ground for the ſuſtenance of a ſingle man. Such eaſy means of ſubſiſtance muſt needs weaken the force of deſpotiſm, for agricultural riches will ever be the moſt powerful arms againſt tyranny.

The advantage of great ſtates conſiſts in this, that the government, which is generally rich, comes forward to the aſſiſtance of the ſociety; that it undertakes public works wherever public utility requires it; that canals, high roads, and edifices are every where multiplied; and that theſe

theſe enterpriſes, vaſt in their conception, facilitate communication, and form eſtabliſhments conducive to the public weal. I know that the degree of confidence is not always that of proſperity; but as ſoon as the play of the political machine is increaſed, the arts beget one another, and emulation, ſpurred on from day to day, ſoars to its higheſt pitch.

It is amid the movements of a great nation, that the induſtry of him who works, completely correſponds with the fancy of him who conſumes. The action of government, by the connection of powers, promotes opulence. The various knowledge poſſeſſed by ſo many men, turns to the general account. Utility derived from things, is almoſt infinitely increaſed by the number of individual perſons. A greater quantity of materials is employed; and the variety of enjoyments produces at one and the ſame time the real and the fancied conveniences of life; for to be maſters of what is neceſſary and eſſential, we muſt poſſeſs that which is ſuperfluous alſo.

The happineſs of a nation, therefore, is what conſtitutes its power alſo; and you cannot at this time, ſeparate the former from the ſtate of the arts, and the progreſs of human intelligences. Now, it requires a large territory to fabricate in abundance various articles; and ſeveral en-

joyments

joyments can no where become familiar and common, unleſs among a very great number of men who hold with each other frequent and conſtant communications. Works of genius will not have their full ſcope unleſs when a large conſumption ſhall be at hand to encourage uſeful and fantaſtic productions, which are in a manner indiviſible. Both of theſe are become ſo many wants; and, as they contribute to ſoften the rigours of exiſtence, policy enjoins that every taſte ſhould be indulged, to give to the empire its higheſt pitch of proſperity.

A great ſtate eſtabliſhes with moſt certainty its phyſical preſervation. The ſcourges of nature, be they as diſaſtrous as they can be imagined, never attack it unleſs partially. War, famine, and the plague, are combated, and their fatal effects diminiſhed, by vaſt and enlightened attentions, and by the junction of many efforts. The province which ſuffers finds aid in the neighbouring province; while remedies and helps of every deſcription, by which greater ravages are prevented, and loſſes ſometimes repaired, are abundantly ſupplied.

A great ſtate depends alſo on its maſs, and defies the event of an attack: it may be penetrated, but cannot be ſubdued by hoſtile invaſions. The French empire owes its permanency

to

to its maſs, by which its neighbours are without any great effort repelled. This kingdom exiſts in the very centre of the moſt vehement jealouſies, and owes its ſecurity entirely to its extent. Now, the progreſſion and increaſe of power, when a population is great, are conſiderable, on this account, that no eſtimation can be made of the quantity of means which can be created.

The ſcourge of war is, at leaſt, conſtantly driven from the centre towards the extremities. The centre is tranquil; and it is altogether improbable that a great empire can be ſuddenly divided and portioned out. It has a powerful reſiſtance, infinite reactions, and vomits forth againſt its aggreſſors an immenſe quantity of arms and warlike ſtores, becauſe poſſeſſed of an extenſive territory. Before they can exhauſt it, its enemies exhauſt their own reſources. It cannot be ſubjugated even by miſcarriages: from its moſt concealed fibres powerful reſources ariſe; and when its parts are thought to be ſeperated, and cut aſunder, even then is ſuch an empire regenerated.

Deſpotiſm, it is true, (and the ſame may be ſaid of an unlimited monarchy, by which it is ſo cloſely reſembled,) agrees quite naturally with a great empire. This, however, can only apply to an enlightened ſtate of the community,

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when a great degree of knowledge is univerſally diffuſed, when a wiſe conſtitution is conſtantly ſpurned, and when little attention is paid to public affairs. But as the laws can never have a better eſtabliſhed aſcendancy, nor a more impoſing majeſty, than when their ſway is exerciſed over an extenſive and populous kingdom, it becomes a ſtate, ſuch as is now deſcribed, to adopt a good conſtitution of government: the great ſpring is lodged in its own boſom, and it can realize the powers which it can readily draw from the extent of its poſſeſſions.

Let me again repeat, that a happy political government is not formed of itſelf: it muſt be the effect of meditation, and the product of wiſdom and ſagacity. In a great ſtate the foundations are laid with the greateſt difficulty, ſince the ſcience of the legiſlator muſt be proportioned to the extent of the population. All the preſent forms of government were formerly deviſed by nations of ſmall extent. The progreſſive riſe of kingdoms evidently produces an extenſion of intelligences; and the fundamental legiſlation, by comprehending a larger ſurface, requires better laws, a more dexterous adminiſtration, and more detailed views, becauſe, in dominions of vaſt extent, thoſe difficulties ſpring

up

up which would be ſcarcely felt in ſmall or parcelled out territories.

There are, notwithſtanding, certain bounds; and when theſe are exceeded the overgrown ſtates then become inert and ſluggiſh, yielding of themſelves like thoſe long cords which are never ſtretched, and which conſtantly preſent a conſiderable curve. It was on this account that China was ſubdued by five or ſix thouſand Tartars, that the Peruvians and Mexicans were exterminated by four or five hundred Spaniards, and that the immenſe empire of the Perſians was overthrown by thirty thouſand Macedonians.

Theſe too bulky ſtates admit of deſpotiſm, not by their nature, but becauſe their reſpective parts are without communication, agreement, and activity, inſomuch, that in the individuals which compoſe them, the human faculties are in a dormant ſtate. Hence ariſes a gradual devaſtation, founded on ignorance, and maintained by the diſunion of the parts.

But it does not follow, that great empires can be governed, to employ the commonly received terms, deſpotically alone. Every nation which neglects public affairs is puniſhed by itſelf for the renunciation it makes: forgetful of its own ſtrength, it ſurrenders its proſperity, inſtead of becoming,

becoming, as it might, a formidable body againſt which thoſe who ſhould be ſo raſh as to aim a blow would periſh in the attempt. When men, in a great ſtate, after having forfeited their own liberty by an abject ſubmiſſion to the prince, convert to their particular advantage the ſlavery of their fellow-ſubjects, that ſlavery preſſes with a double weight; and it becomes the juſt puniſhment of a cowardice which is the more culpable, becauſe the effort to ſhake it off is eaſy in proportion to the number of men who ſupport the oppreſſion and accumulate the common diſaſters.

The balance or equilibrium of Europe is a term not eaſily demonſtrable, but which conveys an idea that at the leaſt prevents three ſtates of a certain extent from uniting againſt a fourth. To obtain its juſt eſtimation, it would be neceſſary to combine the ſecondary cauſes with the firſt; but as this is impoſſible, the political mechaniſm is confined to the preventing of the union of ſeveral ſtates againſt one.

We have, therefore, a choice and ſalutary idea which effectually checks the concuſſion of empires; and without which, it is certain that a vaſt power, itſelf ſhaken to its very foundations, would not permit other ſtates to enjoy their repoſe and their level. The idea of the

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equilibrium reſiſts the deſtruction or too great weakening of any one power; and although it be impoſſible to prove it geometrically, ſtill reaſon makes the calculation.

Thoſe nearly equal forces, which, although they are without a centre, balance each other, diſplay to the imagination, ſtill more active than our reaſon, by the idea of repoſe they afford, all the inconveniences that might reſult from the equilibrium being deſtroyed by a ſudden ſhock and contention.

Thus, that which in any kingdom keeps up a particular order, (that is to ſay, the dread that the different bodies of the ſtate ſhould enter into a conflict with each other,) preſerves Europe in a kind of repoſe; and when an attempt is made to deſtroy this balance, ambition is alarmed, becauſe it cannot eſtimate the final effects of the commotion.

Whatever can ſecure an agreement between all nations, does it even conſiſt in the moſt romantic ideas, is eſſentially good; and this obſervation may apply to all reproaches made collectively againſt large military bodies, and to all thoſe detached phraſes which are addreſſed, by way of final analyſis, to men who certainly are not formed, at the call of ſuch or ſuch a monarch, to wage war againſt each other.

The balance of power is a phraſe of modern invention; but the thing itſelf was known to the ancients. The league of the Grecian republics, the jealouſy Athens excited, the contentions between the ſucceſſors of Alexander, the pretty equal diviſions that were made after the death of that famous conqueror, and the weaker ſide ſupported by the weak, each of theſe facts ſeperately, and all of them conjunctively, prove that the Grecian republics, whether by reaſon or by inſtinct, knew how to preſerve a balance.

The Roman empire had, it is true, a prodigious extent; but here again Carthage was the counterpoiſe of the great power.

Would not the moſt terrible danger to the human race conſiſt in its finding itſelf expoſed to the terrible and preponderating force of an univerſal monarchy? Would not the maſter of ſo many kingdoms neceſſarily abuſe his power, either by himſelf, or through his viceroys? Would not a proud and deſpotic race, which would ſucceſſively annihilate the liberties of Europe, ſpring up from this gigantic ſovereign? The houſe of Auſtria, ſo terrible to the univerſe, ſeems to have afforded a ſample of the incalculable evils which univerſal monarchy would produce in the world; ſo neceſſary is it that ſtates ſhould be limited, and that they

ſhould

ſhould mutually dread each other, to the end that harmony may be diſplayed, and that public liberty may ſomewhere find a rampart.

Sovereigns poſſeſſing enormous territories can only be reſtrained by the dread of having their poſſeſſions attacked: they perceive, confuſedly, that the breach, when once made, is the ſpark by which the fire may be propagated.

England has figured on the globe as a power protecting the general liberty of Europe; and in this point of view may be conſidered as the patroneſs of the human race. Had it not been for England, France, or perhaps Spain, would have acquired an aſcendency over Europe a century ago; and religious liberty at leaſt would have been deſtroyed.

However chimerical the equilibrium of Europe may be, it ſupplies to each ſtate a perſuaſion of its perſonal ſecurity. The little republics ſubſiſt entirely under the ſhelter of this theory; while it is extremely probable, that a general confederacy of all the powers of Europe would be far more injurious to the perſonal liberties of the human race, than thoſe oppoſitions of ſtate to ſtate, which prevent the flux and reflux of nations, and eſtabliſh the privileges of each principality on the baſis of an equal reſiſtance. Hence has the league of certain kings demonſtrated

ſtrated all the miſchief which may reſult from that union which invariably bears hardeſt on the freer nations of Europe.

I am pleaſed at ſeeing ſmall ſhapeleſs ſtates enter into a full perſuaſion, that they either do, or can throw a weight into this balance, ſince the chimera which poſſeſſes them retards the torrent of a deſpotiſm provided with the moſt formidable weapons, and which might otherwiſe literally ſubjugate the human race, no matter whether beneath one or ſeveral hands, for with reſpect to the enormity of the diſaſter it is the ſame thing. It ſhould here be noticed, that every ſtate which has exceeded a certain proportion is prepared for deſpotiſm; and it is a problem incapable of ſolution, that the more men there are in a ſtate, the more are they diſpoſed to ſlavery. The central weight, neceſſarily augmented, inſtead of being a force purely defenſive, becomes, through its very eſſence, firſt offenſive, and at length oppreſſive.

That Europe may be made to form but one and the ſame ſociety is an admirable ſpeculation. But when a ſupernatural being ſhall deſcend from heaven, and take his ſeat on a throne, then, and not till then, I ſhall admit the neceſſity of deſtroying the ſyſtem of that balance, which, notwithſtanding the wars that reſult from

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it, allows a uſeful diviſion to ſubſiſt. Slavery is moſt certainly not to be preferred to the horrors of combats, which, after all, have their truce and their termination.

I ſhall not ſpeak of the balance of trade, a matter which leads to ſtill greater errors, but which does not enter into my ſubject. Kings have made war on a large ſcale for commerce, the ſoldiers of the eighteenth century ſtruggling with each other in the cauſe of merchants: and theſe very kings, forgetful of ſo many efforts made, and ſo much blood ſpilt, have afterwards ſhackled and harraſſed commerce within their own dominions. All this would appear inconceiveable, if a momentary cupidity did not baniſh the remembrance of more durable advantages: the fable of the hen that lay golden eggs, is the emblem of the policy of cabinets.

OF THE CENTRAL FORCE AND ITS RE-ACTIONS.

IN every government a central force is needed. If the public authority has not ſufficient ſtrength to bind equally all the members of the ſtate, then is there an end of unity, ſecurity, and preſervation. To confide ſuch an authority to a ſingle man, is converting it into an arbi-

trary one, and argues the very height of infanity: but this in reality very rarely occurs. Unlimited power falls of itfelf; and in the inftances when a mercilefs defpot has capricioufly put to death a part of the fociety, he has only been fuffered to do fo, becaufe the fociety in general has, for its repofe, approved of the exercife of his fanguinary will. Thus was it with the *Dictator* at Rome; and thus it is with the *Grand Seignior* at Conftantinople. The plenitude of power, granted, in crifes of difficulty, either to a fingle man, or to a fmall number of the citizens, with a view of obviating the pernicious effects which might have refulted from feveral oppofite forces, has been confidered as little dangerous in its tendency. When the peril fubfides, the power of the defpot is neceffarily diminifhed; and the exceffes into which he had gone in the hour of public danger, gave him no legitimate title to repeat them when tranquility is reftored. Where has a man been found, at all times, mightier than a whole nation? every fociety has foon become confcious of its furpaffing him in ftrength.

Befides the conventions that are recognized, the people make an effort to re-eftablifh feveral portions of their independence: the fovereignty becomes mixed, limited, and tempered, becaufe

rational beings do not beſtow on their chief the unlimited faculty of rendering them miſerable. The degree of obedience has almoſt invariably followed the ſum of general good beſtowed on the nation; and no one can at the bottom of his heart reſpect the ſovereign power any further than it appears uſeful to him. Abſolute authority is, therefore, merely a momentary uſurpation, to which nations conſent with the ſole view of combating and deſtroying another tyranny; but the danger being removed, the arbitrary power totters, and at length falls. The motives for refuſing to ſubmit to an abſolute ſway are then combined, and they ſoon triumph over every obſtacle.

Through the whole extent of the globe one nation alone, the Daniſh, has beſtowed an abſolute authority on its ſovereign. This extreme courſe, however, was reſorted to by the Danes to ſhield them from the inſupportable tyranny of their nobility; and notwithſtanding the king of Denmark is inveſted with the moſt formally abſolute power in the univerſe, that government has not exceeded the limits aſſigned to temperate monarchies, ſo true is it, that when the citizens have made the moſt ſolemn ſacrifice of their liberty, a portion of it is ſtill retained by them.

 Wiſe

[library stamp: ...SERFOJI'S...]

Wiſe governments limit themſelves to a power of a certain extent, and are ſenſible of the fatal conſequences which would reſult from its being carried too far. Operations, vicious in themſelves, are conſtantly directed by certain benevolent aims, without which they could have no exiſtence. In Pruſſia it is a maxim never to augment the impoſts; and in another military ſtate, the moſt ſcrupulous attention is paid to the ſecurity of the ſubjects' property. Thus is exceſſive power tempered by certain excellent principles, inſomuch, that beneath the ſhade of great military bodies liberty ſometimes flouriſhes. Impracticable as this may appear, it nevertheleſs exiſts for a certain time.

The ſovereign authority, therefore, is never arbitrary, ſeeing that, beſides the fundamental laws, an infinity of particular laws every where ſuperintend the eſtabliſhment of the order of juſtice. Unqueſtionably there are violences which ſport with the life of the individual; but independently of the reſiſtance made to theſe violences, the evil is merely tranſitory, and when the natural laws are violated, the deſtruction of the arbitrary ones follows.

The people will every where feel inſtinctively, that the government has been made for them,

them, and that they can new model it at their will, when, inſtead of being protected by it, it cruſhes them.

Deſpots have, for the greater part, periſhed by a violent death. The minds moſt happily diſpoſed, deſpotiſm corrupts. He who is deſirous to ſhun evil does not ſeek the power which may throw in his way the temptation; while he who governs by the law has, on his ſide, the force of reaſon and the conſent of the people.

Nothing can be more ſublime than this ſaying, of an emperor of China: *the famine of my people is my famine.*

There are vultures who prey on the moſt noble functions of the ſovereignty. They are infamous traffickers of the moſt important places and employments, and diſtribute honours to thoſe the leaſt worthy of them. Nations, be aſſured, that the ſpeedy downfall of theſe men is certain.

When the ſovereignty is confided to a ſingle man, it evidently behoves the ſovereign to reſpect the laws, ſeeing that thoſe intermediate bodies, in whoſe hands the promulgation of them, whether they be civil or criminal, is placed, enter under ſome denomination or another into the formation of empires. Every na-

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tion abſolutely deprived of the means of reſiſtance would otherwiſe ſink into ſlavery; and without being in the abſolute poſſeſſion of republican laws, the nation which has a body of magiſtrates, is ſheltered from the ruder attacks of arbitrary power, becauſe the magiſtracy can and ought, in caſes of neceſſity, to entitle itſelf: *the repreſentative body of the nation.*

As every citizen, when the country is in danger, is a ſoldier, ſo does every magiſtrate, when public liberty is attacked, become the depoſitary and guardian of the national principles. In ſuch a caſe, the enlightened part of the ſtate, has a right, in the name of the ſtate, to come forward in ſupport of the laws: the object is no leſs than the ſalvation of liberty, and the privilege then reſides in the danger. The laws of neceſſity are anterior to all others; and the reparation, not the ſimple inveſtigation of the ancient foundations, becomes the queſtion.— When the ties which attach us to our country are cloſely knitted by public reaſon, the form of government cannot fail to be good: where the reverſe happens to be the caſe, an attachmentto the ſtate, and the good order of ſociety, require that the citizens ſhould, without delay, apply themſelves to the reſtoration of the public fortune. The defection of the ancient

bodies

bodies invincibly eſtabliſhes the right of the modern bodies, and even ſuppoſing the latter the creation of yeſterday only, ſtill they belong to the country the moment they embark in her cauſe; for it is abſurd to think that a nation either does or can exiſt without repreſentatives. Let the word be proſcribed—with all my heart; but the thing is not the leſs eſſentially neceſſary: it will again and again diſplay itſelf until the laſt breath of political life ſhall be utterly extinguiſhed.

Sidney obſerves, that civil war is not the greateſt of evils. To reduce the people to ſuch an exceſs of miſery, of feebleneſs, and of abaſement, that they have no longer courage or ſtrength to undertake any thing, is infinitely, in my mind, more calamitous.

We muſt not, however, confound thoſe noble and generous citizens who ſeize on the preciſe point, the point of maturity for great revolutions, with thoſe daring diſturbers of the public tranquility, taken from among the claſs of worthleſs and inſignificant men, who, as Monteſquieu obſerves, are no other than incendiaries bellowing forth furious declamations which make no kind of impreſſion unleſs on thoſe who are as furious as themſelves.

In ſtates which have ſhaken off an arbitrary yoke,

yoke, man diſplays the higheſt degree of juſtice and energy; and of all nations, the one which emerges from an abyſs of miſery, and which has purchaſed its liberty at a dear price, is ſuſceptible of the livlieſt ſenſations. There ſophiſms are no longer of any avail: the people wiſh for an equality of rights; and every abſtract conſideration diſappears. Temerity, folly, and deception are confounded; while with one hand the citizen puſhes aſide chicanery and fraud, and with the other the faſtidious promiſes of a maſked ambition.

CHARLEMAGNE.

HOW truly great was Charlemagne! And how maieſtic, among thoſe of our other kings, was the phyſiognomy he diſplayed!. On the ſecond race of them he conferred the glory of his name, and attached to France the grandeur of the reſt of Europe. With what majeſty was he inveſted, when he aſſembled at every point of the monarchy the States General! He was the legitimate chief of a great nation; and never before or ſince, has the throne been filled with ſo much dignity and grace. The ſtates, com-

pofed of all the orders, were themfelves interefted in the maintenance of the equilibrium; while, without the nation ceafing to exift, the authority of the fovereign was fully acknowledged. The people were an honourable family affembled in conjunction with their fupreme administrator, whom their prefence neceffarily brought to a recollection of his duties, of thofe duties which, by their influence, he held dear and facred. Heroifm became to him an eafy tafk, becaufe he deliberated in the midft of an heroical nation.

O! majefty which has no longer an exiftence! Happy would it be if thou couldft be revived for the glory and felicity of a great nation, rendered deferving of fo high a benefit through its courage and its learning! In the reign of Charlemagne the latter was needed: we poffefs it.; and why ought the enjoyments which fhould refult from it, to fly and keep aloof from us at fo aweful a diftance? As much as any nation of Europe, the people of France are endued with manlinefs, generofity, and every amiable quality. But alas! when fhall we fee all the rays of their glory united; and when, in thefe days when they are fo eminently enlightened, will the law, which ought to emanate from the na-

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tion itſelf, be endued with all its force, grandeur and effect?

It may now be ſaid that reaſon, all its rights having been reſtored, is capable to make man think and act in a way deſerving of his noble origin. Unqueſtionably, he ought ere this to have ſhaken off the yoke of the ancient barbarity, and the code of fiſcal laws equally abhorrent. If the great prince who makes the ſubject of this article, frequently aſſembled the States General of his empire, it was leſs to gather information from them, than to enlighten them on his ſide, ſo fully perſuaded was he, that knowledge and reaſon could not fail to contribute to the general weal. Every thing, however, having degenerated under his feeble ſucceſſors, ignorance and ſuperſtition took poſſeſſion of the whole nation, inſomuch, that for entire ages, it was a ſcandal for a gentleman to know how to read. Here it may be aſked, what was to be expected from an aſſembly compoſed of men whoſe minds were ſo utterly uncultivated, and the greater part of whom, become tyrants in their chateau and little cantons, vexed, harraſſed, and oppreſſed the people? The little aid they afforded at that time was, undoubtedly, the cauſe why they became at length neglected, to ſuch a degree, that

that their meetings appear at one epoch to have been totally given up.

It has not been till very lately, that is to ſay, ſince letters have been cultivated with the higheſt ſucceſs, and have diſperſed among us the dark clouds of ignorance, that the States General could be rendered as uſeful, and as neceſſary through their intelligences, as they were formerly little ſo through their ignorance.

Ah! at what time did France ſtand in ſo ſtrong and evident a need to conſult them?* The ſyſtem of Europe, changed for ſomewhat more than a century, has deſtroyed the equilibrium of ſeveral of the ſtates which have happened to be the moſt expoſed to the new ſyſtem of politics. For all this miſchief the States General may be able to find a remedy: enlightened by paſt errors, they have the capacity to remedy great abuſes, and to redreſs ancient wrongs, as well as to re-conſtruct the political machine, and give it a luſtre altogether new. This taſk is not ſo difficult as many intereſted people are perhaps willing to find it; and I do not heſitate to hazard the aſſertion, that I am perſuaded of the poſſibility of its accompliſhment, without

* This fragment was written before the meeting of the States General, which was the forerunner of the French revolution.

convulſion,

convulſion, without perplexity, and without trouble.

Notwithſtanding I have no faith in conſtitutions rigorouſly determined, and although I diſtinctly perceive variations which ſometimes approximate monarchy to the republican form, and at others give the latter the ſtamp and conſiſtence of a monarchy, variations which beſtow an equipoize on the different authorities of governments, ſtill am I firmly perſuaded that a nation ought to recur to its primitive conſtitution. So univerſal is the wiſh for the convocation of the States General now become, that the ancient franchiſes muſt and will reſume all their vigour, it being no longer poſſible to interrupt their courſe, more eſpecially when the greateſt of all evils are to be remedied. An aſſemblage of all France, compoſing a beneficent and majeſtic authority, enriched by the progreſs of knowledge, and again wedded, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, to its ſovereign, would be of infinite advantage both to the monarch and the people.

The national meetings have at various epochs regenerated the kingdom. Unleſs for them Charles V. would not have obtained the ſuccour he ſo much needed, to put him in poſſeſſion of his rightful inheritance. That intriguing wo-

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man, Iſabella of Bavaria, combining her miſchievous plans with the calamities of the reign of Charles VI. left to Charles VII. a deplorable ſucceſſion: here again theſe aſſemblages interfered, put things on a proſperous footing, and diſſipated the factions of the Dukes of Orleans and Burgundy.

It is true, that during the inteſtine religious wars, the ſtates general favoured too ſtrongly of the dogmatic ſpirit of the ages of ignorance; at that time, however, fanaticiſm exerciſed an unbounded ſway over men's minds. Now that patriotiſm is enlightened, and applies itſelf to intereſting objects, the reſources ought to be ſure and prompt, and the axe laid to the root of every evil. The remedy, as it ſtrikes me, reſides in the elementary principles, ſeeing that a nation aſſembled to diſcuſs its own intereſts does not act againſt itſelf, and is grand in whatever it undertakes. If Richelieu ſacrificed the rights of the nation to his deſpotiſm and his imperious will, it is at this time demonſtrated, that arbitrary power is as dangerous to itſelf as a reaſonable and juſtly balanced power is ſtrong in its wiſdom and moderation.

Superſtition has counteracted the advantages which ought to have reſulted from ſeveral of our National Aſſemblies, the ſhades of fanati-

ciſm obſcuring every idea, which it rendered falſe and puerile. To that dark time an enlightened period has ſucceeded; and it now only remains to concentrate the ſcattered rays, and to form them into a luminous pharos calculated to ſecure the veſſel of the ſtate from the ſhoals and quickſands by which it is ſurrounded.

Let me again aſk what really ſalutary law could be expected from the aſſemblage of the nation, at a time when France was divided into a multitude of ſtates, poſſeſſed by thoſe who were called the *high vaſſals?* The ſtates general appear to have terminated their political exiſtence towards the commencement of the laſt century, that is to ſay, at a time when the old leaven of civil wars, joined to that of the ambition of the grandees, as well as the diſcord which then prevailed among them, was ſtill in a high ſtate of ferment: it was leſs for the nation, than for diſcontented princes, that the reſolution to aſſemble them had been formed.

Thoſe unhappy times are now no more. The ſovereign power ſupports itſelf by its own weight: the tyrannical ſpirit of the feudal laws has diſappeared; and the monarch and the nation are eſſentially but one. The indiviſibility of their intereſts, in effect the ſame, is univerſally acknowledged, and the love of the general good

good is now the only paſſion which would preſide at the aſſemblies of the nation. Is it not, therefore, full time that this fine kingdom ſhould enter into the poſſeſſion of the benefits which reaſon ought to reſtore to her? Is it not time that every ancient trace of barbarity ſhould be obliterated? The point of unity, the central point of all the provinces, being abſolutely the ſame, it is juſt that they ſhould alſo have but one ſpirit, and ſhould, by the ſame effort, concur in forming an union at this common centre. Laſtly, the rights of the prince, of the country, and of each individual, being fully appreciated, theſe may be eſtabliſhed on a ſolid baſis, and the general good undiſturbedly fixed. In the midſt of the aſſembly of the ſtates general, the pureſt and moſt diſintereſted patriotiſm, capable of the moſt heroical ſacrifices, might, at length, clear away the burthens of that royal coffer ſtored with calamities which renders a king a kind of perpetual beggar, and which calls for thoſe afflicting edicts that oppreſs his heart. The monarch, now liberated, might obey thoſe generous emotions which have reſtored to ſeveral ſovereigns the love of their ſubjects: he would be no longer during his reign a collector fatiguing himſelf with ſatisfying the old and innumerable ſtate creditors: he would again

become a *king*. But this regeneration, ſo important and unlooked for, can be the work of national generoſity alone, and not until France, that magnanimous nation, ſhall meet its ſovereign face to face. The latter will never be ſo great and ſo reſpected, as when, fully inveſted with his auguſt functions, he ſhall ceaſe to bear the name of *debtor*.

HUGO CAPET.

WHEN Hugo Capet aſcended the throne, the vaſſals made conditions with him ſo advantageous to themſelves, that they no longer were put to any public taſk without receiving a pay from the prince. The ſervices of ſome of them were confined to forty days; and thoſe of others limited to twenty-five, fifteen, and even five days.

The policy of the fiefs was introduced: it divided the kingdom, and plunged the French into a horrid ſtate of barbariſm. Was this a monarchical ſtate?—No; France, ſplit into a thouſand little ſovereignties, became the theatre of an infinity of individual quarrels. Where was then the monarch? and where the monarchy?

narchy? They had no exiſtence; and would it not be the very height of abſurdity to revive at this time that deplorable ariſtocracy which corrupted both the civil government and the military diſcipline, and which was the ſource of ſo much trouble to the ſucceſſors of Hugo Capet, who unremittingly laboured to deſtroy this form of government? It had no reſemblance whatever to that which now flouriſhes; and when the ideas of a proud nobility carry them back to that time, it is the ſame thing as if they were to aim at the deſtruction of the phyſical identity of an individual: for governments have their political identity, and the national intereſt oppoſes theſe pretentions, which are as vain as proud, but would not on that account be the leſs calamitous if carried into effect.

Whence ariſes the extreme difference of power between the kings of France and England, when theſe two governments ſpring pretty nearly from the ſame ſource? From hence, that at the time of the conqueſt of England, the king ſubjected all, whether great or ſmall, inſomuch, that the nobles were obliged to form a league with the third eſtate. In France the king found his equals, whom he repeatedly combated, and did not ſubdue till after a conſiderable length of time, and after encountering

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many difficulties. By the remains of that ancient regimen we are ſtill oppreſſed: it has been the aim of the nobleſſe to re-eſtabliſh their obſolete rights ; and they have kept at an equal diſtance from the monarch and the people, alternately harraſſing each according to circumſtances. It would certainly be advantageous to the king to form a league with his people ; for with them he could not fail to be more powerful, than with thoſe turbulent nobleſſe who ſell their ſervices ſo dear, and who make a trade of adulation, meditating an opportunity of reviving their ancient prerogatives.

In France the people have therefore to ſuffer both from the feudal regimen and the abuſe of royal authority. The nobility, in England, having made one common cauſe with the people, the conſtitution of the kingdom has neceſſarily confirmed the original contract, and civil and political liberty has found its aſylum. This was the reſult of circumſtances ; for this happy equilibrium could not have been diſcovered by all the ſagacity of genius. It muſt be looked for, not from the limited views of man, but from that happy concurrence of events which providence affords to all nations. Wretched will be the lot of thoſe, who, careleſs of the operations of civil ſociety, ſhall allow the cauſes

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which might have regenerated their empire to ſlip by, and ſhall afterwards unavailingly lament their error, when they have fallen into an incurable ſtate of political ſlavery !

The fiefs and their policy have deſolated Europe. It appears to me that the greateſt miſfortune has reſulted from theſe Gothic ſhackles having been torn off in part only, and the work of their entire deſtruction not completed. The eſtates have preſerved a great number of abuſive and injurious rights which have been incorporated with the national laws ; and hence that barbarous mixture of an abſolute monarchy and an hereditary ariſtocracy. The latter has given riſe to that order of nobleſſe which abſorbs the nouriſhing juices, and which, like the ivy, ſtrangles the tree it embraces.

The nobles are not the tie which unites the ſovereign with the people : they, on the other hand, diſunite them. Neither are they the ſupport of the throne ; but the aggregate of the ſociety might be rendered ſo.

The feudal ſyſtem ſprings from the manners of a barbarous and wandering people ; and by them the reſult of theſe manners was preſerved after the conqueſt. This ſyſtem had ſome advantages ſuitable to the time ; but being blended at this period with the monarchy, it gives birth

to a form of government which wounds the people on both ſides. After having ſatisfied the ſovereign, they muſt ſtill ſatisfy the avidity of the nobleſſe; and what is at leaſt as inſupportable as the pride of the latter, the people are driven to entertain a wiſh that the monarch may be put in poſſeſſion of a ſtill greater authority, ſuch as may place all his ſubjects, without diſtinction, on the ſame footing.

OF NATIONAL CHARACTER.

IN general, every law which ſhall not have been framed according to the national character, will prove abortive, and will occaſion diſturbance. How can a legiſlator alone withſtand his nation? If he ſtill undertakes to reſtrain a licentious people, let him avail himſelf of that very licence; for example, would it not have been ridiculous to have propoſed the laws of Sparta to the Athenians? The moſt enlightened and moſt poliſhed deſpotiſm would not even ſuffice to overturn ſuddenly a national licentiouſneſs. It is requiſite that inſenſible changes ſhould give to the legiſlation a particular vent.

Agis, king of Sparta, whoſe crown and whoſe

virtues

virtues were reſpected, endeavoured to re-eſtabliſh the ancient laws without firſt appreciating the force of reſiſtance, and that of the obſtacles in his way. He was tried by his own ſubjects, and condemned to death, becauſe it is not the part of one man to contend with a whole nation.

The ſovereign cannot ſuddenly change the form of the government the reins of which he holds. He will overturn the ſtate ſooner than modify it.

The great work of a new legiſlation requires time. The national characteriſtics muſt be firſt changed; a new turn of thinking, a different mode of feeling and acting, muſt be infuſed among the people, to ſmooth the way, and diſpoſe them to an obedience neither laborious nor conſtrained.

Policy will in vain ſign treaties, will endeavour to unite or disjoin, ſince every union is founded on the exact reſemblance of manners and cuſtoms. Domeſtic education, perhaps, forms citizens with marked ſhades of diverſity, on this account, that cuſtoms are invariable only ſo far as they are connected with habits. Every man in private life indulges peculiar habits, and ſuch as are detached from the ſtate. Hence the Engliſh colonies, politically ſeparated from the mother country, will hereafter unite

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by an immediate contact, that is, by commerce.

Lycurgus, whose laws astonish us, had only to confirm the customs supported by the strongest habits. The institutions were then all founded on the equality of sentiment, of condition, and of corporeal strength. Lycurgus merely united the state of nature to the civil constitution, softening this rude nature by the order of social life.

This great legislator could bestow these laws on a state alone limited to a small number of inhabitants calculated to receive them; otherwise the rigor of such a legislation must have produced evils of great magnitude.

He could not have prevailed on a great people to retrench every call of luxury and effeminacy. Already was the life of the Spartan spent in military exercises; frugal and laborious, he was enured to every sort of fatigue. Lycurgus easily expelled gold and luxury from a country where they had not yet taken root.

A nation which possesses nothing but its manners, embraces readily the destructive life of avarice and of effeminacy. That famous constitution comprehended also the Helots; and Sparta might consequently have incurred the reproach cast upon Rome and Carthage, which often

often were under the deepeſt apprehenſions from their ſlaves. But the Helots, born in the boſom of ſlavery, and therefore formed to the yoke, ſeldom attempted to revolt; becauſe, perhaps, their maſters were leſs terrible than they appear to us to have been.

WHAT IS THE HAPPIEST NATION.

IT is an important queſtion to ſolve, what nation was ever the happieſt? It may be anſwered; That which was moſt enlightened, which was acquainted with the arts that nouriſh and comfort life. A nation is an aggregation of men: when this nation proſpers, when it has baniſhed an odious adminiſtration, deſpotiſm and tyranny, and has eſtabliſhed individual liberty, it poſſeſſes a character of force which communicates itſelf to each member of the ſociety; it acts with dignity. Such at preſent is the ſituation of England; the originality of that nation, its political contentions, and its impetuous paſſions, prove all of them a ſource of enjoyment. Deſpotiſm is adverſe to the felicity of a people, only becauſe it extinguiſhes knowledge: it is in the darkneſs of ignorance that

man is ſtript of that precious liberty, the abſence of which ſinks him almoſt to the condition of a brute.

Deſpotiſm has its full ſway in thoſe countries alone where the arts have not yet reared their heads. View Africa, which has always been ſubject to deſpotiſm, and the whole of Aſia, which has never had any maſters but deſpots: in theſe vaſt regions the arts and ſciences ſlumber, and the minds of the inhabitants are feeble and wretched, becauſe they are unenlightened. Behold the centre of Europe: deſpotiſm was never able to fix its ſeat there; the people would vigorouſly reſiſt a throne terribly filled, nor would they ſubmit to ſee their blood wantonly ſhed. Republics ſtill contain the men beſt informed on their reſpective rights.

The period at which Greece, ſo renowned for her arts and ſciences, flouriſhed, was when ſhe reckoned moſt great men in every profeſſion. The bright days of the Roman government were under Auguſtus, under Titus, that excellent prince, the darling of the world, and under Marcus Aurelius; every enjoyment was then beſtowed on the people. Follow hiſtory, and behold every where the reign of the arts enfeeble the ſtrokes of deſpotiſm, undermine, and deſtroy it. The Arabs themſelves, diſtinguiſhed

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by their talents for war and for letters, defended liberty; and the Chriſtian religion, which may be regarded as a new luminary deſcended upon earth, has, among many nations, looſened the bonds of ſlavery.

What deſtroyed the peace and felicity of the nations that recovered by degrees the pleaſures connected with the cultivation of the arts? Was it not the inundation of barbarians from the north who overſpread Europe with terror and ſuperſtition? They deſtroyed the monuments of the arts, overturned the Roman empire, where men reſpired with ſome portion of dignity, and drew after them ſcourges worſe than death,—error, ſuperſtition, and rude laws. They ſubſtituted monſtrous laws of polity to that majeſtic code of the Romans which wiſdom had dictated. Europe was depopulated, and thoſe odious tribunals aroſe of which the very name affrights innocence.

The return of the ſciences could alone mitigate ſo many evils. The eaſt reſtored them to the weſt, from which they had been long baniſhed. When this beneficent light ſhone forth, whole nations opened their eyes, and broke the yoke under which they groaned. As the illumination of knowledge increaſed, ſo the oppreſſion of individuals diſappeared.

The conſtitution of free ſtates is the reſult of that application of thought which has baniſhed barbariſm and narrow and ferocious ideas. Philoſophy has founded the independence of America, and all nations have applauded that great example. Juſt and moderate governments have been formed by books. Liberty has appeared even in ſeveral military governments, becauſe the power of the ſword was reſtrained by public reaſon, and the vigilant remonſtrances of the citizens.

The lights of knowledge have created a new order of things; people enjoy more proſperity in proportion as the ties by which they are united are more cloſely drawn. The arts have eſtabliſhed that precious communication which makes all Europe now take a concern in what paſſes at Vienna, at Madrid, or at Paris. A political tranſaction is no longer confined to the ſpot where it paſſes; it has an extended influence, and no nation remains indifferent to a public injury done to another nation.

Thoſe prompt ideas which afford nations a communication through the conſtant advantage of the preſs, are at preſent the ſureſt ramparts of individual liberty; and glory and ſhame, having each a trumpet in its hand, hover over the thrones of Europe, and pour forth praiſe or

blame

blame on the crowned heads that cannot controul the public opinion.

The redreſs of the injuries done to nations will be obtained by that vigilant voice which is on no occaſion ſilent, but examines and judges each tranſaction. Behold England, which by its lofty ſpirit and its deteſtation of arbitrary power, reſtrains proud deſpotiſm, and ſeems to invite Europe to imitate its conduct. This living example ſupports dejected minds; and every citizen turns his eyes upon that nation.

See if republics are not more enlightened than ſmall dependant ſtates. The Helvetic body owes its form, its peace, and its ſecurity to wiſe laws profoundly planned. Liberty has given thoſe ſtates a weight in the ſcale of nations which they could never have attained, if knowledge had not pervaded all ranks.

How did Frederic govern his kingdom? By the ſuperiority of his genius, by his knowledge of men and things, by his love of the arts, and by the diſtinction which he beſtowed on them. He excelled in tactics, as he had a talent for wit. If prejudice be the radical vice of nations, Frederic knew to extirpate it; and, with one glance, he diſcovered that the field of the agreeable arts, well cultivated, will, at the ſame time, produce, in all their perfection, thoſe terrible

rible arts which put in action the engines of war. It required his abilities to perceive this intimate connection; all Europe has beheld his succefs.

What is wanting to the fplendid but feeble monarchy of Spain? It is univerfally admitted to be funk into languor and decay: like a leaf of metal it has loft in thicknefs what it has gained in extent. The arts alone can reftore to it folidity.

Does not the Ottoman empire feel it necef-fary to awake from its lethargic flumber? Does it not invite from every quarter the arts which will reftore its ftrength, by binding together the different parts of that empire? Barbarifm has enfeebled the Turk, but the adoption of new ideas will confer on him a new vigor.

By what talifman was the fuccefs of Ruffia effected? That empire flept remote and un-known: but when the leaven of the arts quick-ened the dead lump of animality, it difplayed all its force; it took an active concern, and ob-tained a mighty influence in the political affairs of Europe. The Ruffians, dexterous imitators, only imported a few Frenchmen, and fuddenly fhook off the yoke of preceding ages. Though the bulk of the nation was rude, the head was enlightened,

enlightened, and conquefts have fhed luftre on a nation unobferved a century before.

We cannot refift feeling the influence of the arts: whilft on the one hand they beftow grandeur on a nation, they give to each individual on the other hand, a greater fum of liberty and profperity.

That nation is the happieft, therefore, which contains the greateft number of intelligent men, diffufing the knowledge neceffary to civilization.

COMMON ORIGIN.

NEARLY all governments have had the fame origin; they have arifen from national affemblies, held either for civil affairs or military expeditions.

The changes which take place in the conftitution of monarchical ftates, are invariably connected with the augmentations of power acquired by the executive authority.

The French nation had its diets and its ftates general when its population became augmented and it occupied a vaft territory. It confided to the king the charge of convening the ftates, and that of directing them to the clergy and nobility, to whom were annexed the deputies of the third eftate.

eſtate. The monarchs inſenſibly and purpoſely neglected the convocation of the States General.

In France, the abſolute power of the ſovereign is owing to the great domains held by the crown. Scarcely had Lewis XI. annexed Burgundy to France, than the French monarchy underwent a ſenſible change.

The junction of Franche-Còmté, Alſace, and the ſtates of Flanders, under Louis XIV, completed the abſolute authority. The Spaniſh monarchy experienced the ſame fate under Ferdinand the Catholic, Charles V, and Philip II. The ſecond of theſe, at once emperor and king of Spain, ſubjugated Germany by Spain, and Spain by Germany.

The kings of Sweden, after their conqueſts obtained over the Germans, Poles, and Ruſſians, were, for the firſt time, inveſted with plenary authority. Did not deſpotiſm, in England, make the greateſt ſtrides during the reigns of William the Conqueror, Henry II, Henry VIII, and James I? It was, becauſe theſe princes were, by their conſiderable acquiſitions, enabled to overawe their ſubjects.

There are prejudices which, by their antiquity, and with the aid of certain impoſing words, ſeem effectually to have uſurped every right. Of this number are the fantaſtic ideas

entertained

entertained on feudal government, which owed its origin to the little communication at that time kept up, and to the poverty of the arts: confidering the ignorance which then prevailed, the fyftem was certainly not bad. In proportion, as the number of particular focieties was augmented, with the greater difficulty were they oppreffed. This ftate was not the one the leaft conformable to human nature, to tranquility, and peace.

The feudal government has had its profperous days, its majefty, and its force. It was wedded to univerfal ignorance, which is not, like error, dangerous; and was adapted to ages in which the arts and fciences, but little advanced, had not yet eftablifhed communications between empires.

But have not thefe modern communications produced extraordinary convulfions in our time? How many of thefe have they not given rife to, to unite ftates which were heretofore disjoined?

Since the difcovery of America, have not the affairs of that continent thrown into confufion the old world, which was quite fufficiently engroffed with its own agitations. The feudal government was in itfelf, abftractedly confidered, extremely imperfect; but for the ages

in which it prevailed, it was a *chef-d'œuvre* of reaſon and policy. The diſperſed and fortified chateaus ſerved to divide and protect a multitude of individuals; and, in the mean time, the maſs of population was preſerved unſhaken.

It may, perhaps, be ſaid, that France has been freed from heavy calamities, by the union of her provinces under the ſame dominion, which has prevented their waging war againſt each other. But does not war draw from theſe very provinces a multitude of ſoldiers who are ſacrificed on the frontiers? Heretofore they died for intereſts with which they were acquainted; they now expire for intereſts to which they are ſtrangers. Is it not demonſtrated that too extenſive an empire is not leſs fatal to man than a multiplicity of ſmall ſtates?

In general, men are happier in ſtates of a certain extent; and particular ſocieties are more perfect when the part which governs can make its authority be every where felt, and can correct every abuſe. States of this deſcription are not expoſed to thoſe ruinous revolutions, the uſual criſis of polity, which inceſſantly harraſs too extenſive ſtates, unremittingly engaged in the ſame projects.

An empire may be overthrown without any abatement of the public felicity. A conquered

territory which preſerves its manners, its laws, and its property, feels no other change than that of the name of a new dynaſty.

That the people ſhould have no right to a voice in what regards the public weal, would be contrary to the order of things; for what would a nation be without repreſentatives? The great teſtimonial of the liberty of the French nation reſided in the aſſembly of the States General: but that which is adapted to one age does not ſuit another. At this time the higher ranks of the clergy are altogether made up of nobles, and by this means the two orders are ſo effectually blended, that the third eſtate is in a manner abſorbed, the number of the individuals who have votes in the aſſembly, not being proportioned to the grandeur of the nation and the majeſty of its rights. The ancient compoſition of our States General would be at this moment extremely defective, becauſe the repreſentatives of the people might be readily ſubdued by the league of the two higher orders.

The bulk of the nation not being able to appear in this great aſſembly, another mode of voting muſt be fallen on, ſuch as will be more favourable to public tranquility and the intereſts of the people: the latter will otherwiſe be irrevocably loſt by the weight of the gothic forms,

with which the nobility and clergy will moſt unqueſtionably oppreſs them.

In a ſtate in which the power of the ſovereign predominates, how are the people to vote in ſuch a way as that the public opinion can be eſtimated? They are impelled, as it were, inſtinctively, to ſupport in their magiſtrates the right of making remonſtrances, that is to ſay, of judging in a certain degree of the goodneſs and juſtneſs of an edict: and here the magiſtracy is not ſimply paſſive. According to the people, this right of re monſtrating originates in a truſt bequeathed to the parliament by the lateſt States General; and they conſtantly flatter themſelves, that they are preſent at the operations of government, ſo long as the magiſtrates, the daily interpreters of their wiſhes, can influence whatever regards the public weal, by the force, concert, and free expreſſion of their ſentiments, conveyed to the foot of the throne through the organ of the parliaments. The French nation, notwithſtanding the obſcurity in which the origin of its rights is enveloped, has appointed the magiſtrates its repreſentatives; and the intereſts of the people demanded that this repreſentation ſhould be efficacious in its fulleſt extent: there would otherwiſe be a diſguiſed ſlavery in the inſtitution of the parliaments, which, become mute and paſſive,

five, would be spectators of the highest political disorders without elevating their voice, or at least without attesting the danger of the commonweal. Thus are these national and popular tribunals at once a check on tyranny, and one of the most solid ramparts of public liberty.

It follows, that the attacks made on magistracy, are so many attacks on the people. The latter have been sensible of the necessity of having representatives, by whatever appellation these might be distinguished, until they could fall on a better mode of protection.

To this public and patriotic voice, let an addition be made; it will be so much the better. Let the sovereign call about his person virtuous and enlightened men; this will become an extension of the legitimate tribunals. The assembly of notables, in 1787, evinced by its zeal, intelligence, and patriotism, that the nation can pronounce with wisdom, and act with dignity; and that every kind of knowledge, as well as all the virtues, may one day emanate from its bosom. The statue of Praxiteles is in the block.

It appears to me, that the bad form of the French government has arisen neither from the fundamental laws, nor from the temperature of the climate. It was not originally what it is, nor could it have been so, since in such a case it

would have been utterly repugnant to any idea of an equality of rights among individuals.— Little accidents, which could neither have been foreseen nor repaired, have insensibly undermined the French constitution, into which abuses have gradually crept from a very remote period; and these abuses have been assimilated to the passions of those who possessed any share of authority, producing in the issue very strong shades of difference. Hence have sprung the infinite variations which have rendered it so difficult to apply a remedy.

Custom is far more dangerous than a bad law. The latter falls of itself, while the former, inherent in the nation, does not always afford the consolatory hope of its annihilation being brought about; and when, in this chaos, it is necessary to combine new laws, the efficacy of which is always uncertain, with old laws replete with vigour—when it becomes expedient to unite the ancient genius of the nation with new maxims, and to spare certain privileged abuses while others are attacked, what can be accomplished without the national genius, that is to say, without the will which endures for ages, while kings pass away?

Where are the guides who shall fix on the remedies to be embraced? I can take upon me

to aſſert, that the body which governs will find itſelf under the neceſſity of liſtening to the part which inſtructs, becauſe it will then have need of a great fecundity of ſmall means. The enlightened portion of the ſociety, gifted with every human intelligence, would certainly find it an eaſier taſk to conduct by its precepts a new, rural, and ſimple nation: but the very age of the nation in queſtion, its vices, its opulence, its inherent prejudices, its origin, every thing, in ſhort, points out that it is not to be created afreſh, but to be preſerved and maintained under the ſhelter of certain modifications.

The egotiſm of profeſſions would be in itſelf an almoſt inſurmountable obſtacle, if men's minds were not ſufficiently prepared for the changes to be introduced. Each of theſe profeſſions forms a ſmall republic which makes itſelf the centre of every idea, and pertinaciouſly adheres to principles whether they be good or bad: it perſecutes whatever thwarts its ancient and predominating prejudices; is intolerant towards that which deviates from its principles; and raiſes a confuſed outcry, which, to a certain extent around, obſcures the truth. As theſe profeſſions merely aim at the advancement of their own particular intereſts, they never em-

brace

brace general ideas; and they thus nip in the bud each patriotic ſubject.

It behoves the ſtateſman to ſubdue thoſe puerile difficulties which embarraſs him more in his progreſs than the moſt ſerious obſtacles; and the moment when he can ſtrike his blow with ſecurity ought to be the object of his particular ſtudy. It will not be his beſt policy to exhauſt all his efforts on ſuch ſmall abuſes as ought to fall of themſelves: he ſhould rather reſerve his authority and his might to overturn, by degrees, the viciouſly conſtructed edifice, the unexpected and ſudden fall of which might otherwiſe involve in its ruin each ſurrounding object. It is thus that the ſtateſman ought to act, and not to allow his attention to be engaged by trifles. A ſingle blow carefully meditated, and prudently timed, may prevent many needleſs repetitions of the ſtroke; for in politics it is expedient, not to tear ſlowly, but to cut with firmneſs.

In the adminiſtration of the ſtateſman, the moſt dangerous quality of all is pedantry, or in other words, that obſtinacy which, where an univerſal agitation prevails, will neither retract nor concede; which is ignorant that it is ſometime expedient to relax the ſprings of government;

ment; which will grant nothing to the paſſions; and which, inceſſantly engaged in barren and fruitleſs reaſonings, deceives itſelf, and for want of knowing how to temporize, changes nothing for the better. This pedantry will be fruſtrated in all its plans: it will ſink under the force of its meaſures; and will be at once hateful and ridiculous.

Learning is the true buckler againſt deſpotiſm. When in the time of their caliphs, the Arabians cultivated the arts and ſciences, they lived under a milder deſpotiſm than that of Perſia; but when they again ſunk into ignorance, the ancient ſeverity of their government was reſumed. The encroachments of power conſtantly increaſe in an inverſe ratio to talents.

As the moſt ſtupendous mountains ſpring up from a barren, ſtony, and deſert ſoil, ſo does ſuperſtition take root among nations, in which there is an entire void of ideas.

The part which is governed ſubmits volutarily, provided it does not ſee the reins by which it is guided: it loves not to feel the hand which directs it. Its ſubmiſſion, while it appears voluntary, is profound; but it is untractable as ſoon as it perceives the ſhadow of violence.

Can a nation be ſo aptly guided as by its own ideas, which it cheriſhes ſo dearly? The reaſon,

ſon, perhaps, why in our governments we have done ſo little with ſuch very great efforts, is that, neglecting this infallible mean, we have too ſeldom ſwayed men by reaſon, of all impulſes the moſt powerful.

How happens it that a ſtateſman does not ſee in men reaſonable and ſenſible beings, capable of receiving ideas of every kind? And on what can ſo ſtrange an opinion be founded? How did he contrive to diſtinguiſh himſelf all at once from the general maſs, and to forget ſo ſuddenly the intereſt of the people, in the number of whom he is himſelf, as well as his friends, relatives, and cotemporaries, unqueſtionably comprehended? How ſtrange that he ſhould be inſenſible to public favour, to that ſweet renown which ſhould every where perfume his paſſage, ſhould ſatisfy his heart and his eyes, and effect the happineſs of all that is dear to him!

The elementary idea of juſtice is attached to the ſoul of man, to whom the natural law is revealed. Entering into a communication with reaſonable beings like himſelf, he can hold ſuch an intercourſe by concord and juſtice alone: if he is deſirous that his neighbour ſhould reſpect his field, he alſo muſt reſpect that of his neighbour.

The moment that a relation ſubſiſts between

two beings, juſtice is eſtabliſhed: it is a reciprocal right they have over each other.

As ſoon as this relation ceaſes, there is an end to all feeling and ſenſibility. Man deſtroys the animal as he hews down a tree, becauſe, between the animal and him there is no relation whatever. Nature has ordained, that the human race ſhould feed on the ox and the herring, becauſe no obligation can ſubſiſt between theſe ſpecies and man.

CROMWELL.

CIRCUMSTANCES ariſe that require a government to be new-modelled. The right of innovation then belongs to him who is endued with due genius and courage for ſuch an enterprize. It is a mutilated ſtatue which muſt be thrown into the founder's crucible. The new proportions are at the diſpoſal of the man who directs the caſt. Of this, Cromwell is a recent example; he perceived what would beſt ſuit his country.

When the load of ſervitude has hung for ages upon a nation, if at laſt it happily obtains liberty, we may reſt aſſured, that it will long enjoy the bleſſing without abuſing it.

The

The caſe is different with republics. Liberty among theſe is liable to abuſe; and the moſt glorious period of a nation is not after it is free, but at the moment it breaks its chains.

People forget the forms of government their anceſtors inſtituted, when they committed their deſtiny to thoſe who, by their genius, influenced the times in which they lived. This facility of temper gives birth to deſpotiſm; whoſe nature it is to increaſe perpetually until it be checked. But ſooner or later the people, with a proportional reſiſtance, will deſtroy the exuberance of power: the balance is again reſtored and the moments of violence are uſually few in number, and affect only a portion of the ſociety.

Obſerve in hiſtory the people, on ſome proud day of revolution, treat the deſpot as he did his ſlaves. He cut off their heads, his own is laid on the block.

Nations are not daſtardly, but they wait for the moment of inſurrection, they wait for an avenger.

When in the vaſt circle of events, there occurs a perſon fitted for revolutions, the people finiſh what was already begun in men's minds. But ſometimes they blindly deliver themſelves to tyrants more dangerous than the one from

whom

whom they efcaped. They care not; they glut their revenge.

When a man, like Charles I. weak and obftinate, clafhes with a Cromwel, one of thofe rare perfonages whom nature has formed to win, to fubdue, and to command, it is the collifion of two rapid but unequal bodies; it is the fortuitous fhock of a tremendous comet againft a humble planet. If the Cromwel does not perifh, the Charles muft lofe his head.

Guife oppofed Henry III.; and Henry III. had, only by a few days, the ftart of Guife; otherwife, Guife would have acted in France the part Cromwel played in England.

There are occafions when the hands entrufted with authority may, and ought to employ a virtuous defpotifm. If a great evil is to be repreffed, if a plan favorable to the happinefs of a people is to be laid, the noble exercife of power then belongs to them exclufively. But thofe who are truly actuated by a fublime motive, prove at the fame time the fact that they are thus actuated; they fuffer no delay between the enterprize and the benefit which is the refult of it.

Thus, many revolutions fo loudly cenfured in their origin, have only reftored to government its force and liberty. There is hardly a civil

civil war the event of which has not been ſalutary: ſeldom does a nation revolt to fall back under deſpotiſm; the times of commotion and trouble prepare tranquillity and repoſe for ſucceeding generations.

FALSE COMPUTATIONS.

POLITICAL calculations are erroneous when founded on the extravagant idea that modern ſtates are a *patrimony*. The European ſyſtem is deranged at the very time when the greateſt efforts are made to prevent a *preponderance*. The heireſs of Burgundy could not be deprived of the power of *bequeathing* her kingdom to the houſe of Auſtria; nor could Charles II. be prevented from *leaving* Spain to the duke of Anjou. There ſtill ſubſiſts an agreement of fraternity and ſucceſſion between the houſe of Brandenburg, that of Saxony, and the Landgraves of Heſſe.

Lorraine and Corſica annexed to France; Parma acceeded to the houſe of Bourbon; the duchies of Tuſcany and Mantua to the ambition of Auſtria; Scotland, to that of England; a part of Poland, wreſted by its neighbours;

Courland

Courland and Dantzic threatened; the duchy of Holſtein yielded up to the king of Denmark; the vaſt eſtates of the Palatine family deſtined to a ſingle maſter: how ſhall we calculate the counterpoiſes to ſuch unexpected arrangements? Politics muſt change with events; a bomb is fired in Spain, it burſts at Rio-Janeiro; the diſputes on the Danube will carry the flames of devaſtation into Naples; and the adjuſtment of the boundaries of Nova Scotia will devaſtate Mecklenburg. The war of Corſica was decided, it is ſaid, by a *joke at ſupper*; and the alliance of two powerful monarchies was brought about by the reſentment of a miniſter to a great king, who, in the ſtile of Boileau, had introduced into a *couplet* the name of a cardinal at that time an abbé.

Republics are not more exempt than monarchies from theſe ſudden changes. The little concerns of courts become political affairs, and theſe affairs ſway the world. Thus the quarrel of two women procured to Europe the peace of Utrecht; thus the partizans of a Stadholder conducted the French to the gates of Nimeguen in 1747; thus was the ſyſtem of the North changed, becauſe Peter III. was dethroned; and thus the influence of a favourite, has in France, given, or taken away, the ſtaff of command.

 This

This fluctuation of favours and disgraces has produced the greatest revolutions: an absurd stiffness on the part of Great Britain separated America for ever from the mother country, and rendered the heretofore colonies free and independant.

Could the unprecedented event of the peaceable dismemberment of Poland have been presumed, any more than the supine indifference of Europe with which it was attended? The political calculator at least would not have believed the tranquillity with which that revolution was effected; he would not have credited the docility of a nation which formerly struck terror into the Muscovites, the Swedes, the Germans, and the Tartars; still less would he have reckoned on the silence of the European courts. Internal anarchy, and the rivalship of the Marechals of the confederation, each of whom, at the head of a detachment, aspired to be an independant general, threatened disasters, but not that catastrophe, which, in a twinkling, has reduced to servitude men who conceived themselves armed in defence of their lives and liberties. Each politician was far from forseeing, that while the confederates were publishing pamphlets in France and Bavaria, their pro-

vinces

vinces were to be invaded with a ſucceſs that did not even awaken national deſpair.

The balance of power, ſo much prized and ſought after, is therefore a mere illuſion. How can the weights of different powers be equalized? Europe has taken arms to defend the political balance, at one time againſt the Auſtrian monarchy, and at another againſt Louis XIV. The ſame forces which conſpired to exalt an empire, have combined to ſhake it. The ſyſtem of equipoiſe has bewildered men, and the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle diſplays the groſſneſs of the error.

This ſyſtem of equipoiſe was to divide Europe into two factions, whoſe deſtructive colliſion was to prevent reciprocal encroachments. Such viſions exiſt no longer, I believe, in the heads of miniſters, but they long miſled and perplexed cabinets.

It is mentioned in an hiſtorical work, that Andrew, a deſpot of Romania, ſole heir of his uncle, Conſtantine, the laſt of the Greek emperors eſtabliſhed at Conſtantinople, reſigned all his titles to the imperial throne in favor of Charles VIII. and his ſucceſſors. Thus the kings of France have a legal claim to the empire of the Paleologi; for who can render a ceſſion valid, if a deſpot cannot? It may be ſaid,

 that

that the Turkiſh ſultan, a deſpot likewiſe, will reply, that every deſpotic ſtate belongs to the actual poſſeſſor of it : a lawyer would urge, in reply to this, the right of preſcription ; and a miniſter would haughtily declare, that arſenals furniſh the beſt arguments. But the powers of Europe, without recurring to theſe reaſons, would inſiſt that the balance muſt be preſerved. The word *balance* has a powerful aſcendancy in theſe diſputes, or ſyllogiſms, which others will call ſophiſms. Give a logician of the North Eaſt the rights, and above all, the forces of France, with plans to direct them, and you would ſee that Andrew, the deſpot of Romania, did not make an imaginary grant, and that laws, both human and divine, would be called to its ſupport.

Providence has willed, that there ſhould be a juſt reaction between the ſhock of two bodies, which, politically ſpeaking, prevents any ſtate whatever from devouring, and above all, to uſe the energetic expreſſion of Rouſſeau, from digeſting another ſtate.

But there is friction alone in a detached political machine ; for the government of a nation is a mechanical combination. The power of the chief ſhould be in equilibrium with the reaction of the individuals. Behold the pendalum of

of a clock; it maintains, by its oſcillations, the uniformity of the relations ſubſiſting reciprocally among the different wheels. In like manner, a regulator is needed to direct all the parts of the political machine. The government of a nation is, in this light, a mechanical combination, as all the evils to which it is ſubject proceed from the friction of the moving parts, that is, from the private intereſts which claſh with the public good. The regularity of the effects, therefore, depends on the weight which impels the whole, while the different wheels, nicely adapted, perform their ſeveral offices.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WHAT has the great diſcovery of America procured to man, by the extenſion of his dominion? The moſt atrocious crimes, the motives of fury and carnage, a terrible diſeaſe that poiſons innocent pleaſure, and a monſtrous luxury which has corrupted all the nations of Europe. Thus has their communication with the new world produced barbarous wars, an inſiduous policy, and a perpetual violation of the moſt ſacred rights.

Theſe mighty ills are about to be corrected by the benefits of legiſlation: it will animate the weſtern continent by happy views formed in Europe.

The force of laws will ſubdue the averſion to the ſocial ſtate; philoſophy will traverſe thoſe proſperous climes; and modern writers will prepare felicity to future generations.

What ſignifies the appellation of *rebels*, when the ſword of victory has decided the quarrel? When a nation forms to itſelf a legiſlation, commerce, paper money, armies and fleets, is it not entitled to declare its independance?

If it is a country that contains no beggars or robbers, if its foreſts are not dangerous to paſs through, if the executioner wants employment; be aſſured the government is good.

Of all revolutions, that of America is the moſt important in the eyes of a philoſopher; becauſe the United States, abſolved, as I have ſaid, from the crime of rebellion by the ſword of victory, and more eſpecially by the code of univerſal liberty, will diſplay forms of government the beſt ſuited under heaven to the dignity of the human race.

The American conſtitutions, framed by the wiſdom and meditation of European philoſophers, are about to eſtabliſh a ſtate of things

which

which will be a new creation upon earth. But the free American is ſtill infected with the political and moral vices which the ravages of war engender. He ſeems to harbour perpetually an implacable enmity to the old world; and, whether through weakneſs or pride, he does not ſhow, in matters of trade, that ſincere probity, and that ſacred good faith, which, accompanying ſo many public virtues, would ſhed additional honor upon an emancipated people. He wants thoſe private virtues which he will undoubtedly acquire, when he ſhall have reflected that they are the pledges of all the reſt. A miſtaken avarice now deprives him of that illuſtrious renown which renders the individual as reſpectable as the nation.

Aſſuredly the American, ſenſible to this juſt reproach, will cultivate political morality through all the ramifications of his new ſociety; and public ſpirit, ſtill more improved, will turn him aſide from the crooked paths of craft, and open to his view all the roads of glory, to the end that he may preſerve in the world that luſtre which has already announced itſelf, and which he ought to merit in every feature of his exiſtence.

The American ought, therefore, to conduct his commercial tranſactions with more open-

neſs, honor, and dignity; for it is not enough to ſay, "we have no robbers among us," if cunning, diſſimulation, chicanery, and low avarice lurk behind the counters of the American merchants.

DECEITFUL TERMS.

WHAT proves the imaginary diſtinction of governments is this, that a ſingle man has never governed an immenſe multitude: that which is denominated a government of one alone is evidently the government of ſeveral.

When a monarch is called a father, it is merely an image; there would otherwiſe be an intolerable abuſe of terms. This father, who has twenty millions of children, is not acquainted with the whole of his family; and whatever may be the extent of his paternal feelings, he is impelled to a limited and particular predilection.

In all the ſciences, man, to aid his memory, has contrived claſſes, which he has in the ſequel converted into rigorous principles. But at what period did nature thus modify objects? It is phyſically impoſſible that one ſingle power can abſorb all the others; and intermediate bodies will

will ſtart up to reſiſt the violent attacks of deſpotiſm. A tyrant cuts off heads, as a robber aſſaſſinates in a foreſt; but the one is ſtrangled, and the other aſcends the ſcaffold. Each is a particular violence which has its courſe, but neither is, nor can be authoriſed by the general will.

Men have in all ages been deceived by words.

A barbarous and ignorant nation, when it is ſpread over a vaſt territory, becomes a prey to deſpotiſm, becauſe its warlike chiefs have then the maſtery, and becauſe there are no merchants, cultivators, men of letters, magiſtrates, and, in ſhort, no diſtinction: a part poſſeſſes itſelf of the government; the other part allows itſelf to be governed. This nation is not attacked by thoſe little extortions which in poliſhed ſtates are levied with ſo delicate a fineſſe: as the perſons of the governed are in the hands of the chiefs, they are killed, not wearied out; but when the ſervitude ceaſes to be perſonal, then is the ſeizure made on men's property, and on their thoughts.

The forms of government are modified to infinity. Under the firſt race of the French kings, the mayor,* elected and maintained by

* Maire du Palais.

the

the grandees, made a part of the conſtitution of the government ; and by this counterpoiſe the nobles were protected againſt the encroachments of the monarch. Every thing, it is true, was done in the name of the latter ; but ſtill the mayor had an efficient power of which he could not be diſpoſſeſſed.

In all governments I perceive powers which, while they reciprocally claſh, counterbalance each other. When the weaker of theſe is not violently oppreſſed by the ſtronger, it is tranquil ; but when it groans under its ſufferings, it re-acts with energy.

Interrogate a monarch : he is fully apprized that he does not always accompliſh what is conſonant to his wiſhes ; and perceives that obſtacles lie in his way. Thoſe pathetic proteſtations and exhortations addreſſed to a ſingle individual are chimerical : fifteen millions of men, who throw themſelves on their knees, and beſeech this fellow mortal to make them happy, form an extraordinary ſpectacle.

The Indian, who adores the clumſy idol he has himſelf ſhaped, is not leſs ridiculous. A king is ſurrounded by reſtraining powers, and has neither the extent of capacity, the might, nor the leiſure to do every thing : it therefore belongs to the nation itſelf to redreſs its wrongs,

more eſpecially as it is impoſſible for a ſingle man to confer on it a complete and perfectly modelled happineſs. If this nation is unprovided with arms, let its ſtruggles be with words, and let it ſtruggle unceaſingly, not forgetting the timely application of ſatire, that formidable weapon. The power of the monarch is limited: he may exile or impriſon certain individuals, and even put them to death. He will pay dearly, however, for theſe ſhort lived vengeances: the titles beſtowed on him, and the troops he muſt pay, every reſource, in ſhort, will ſoon fail him.

A kingdom has been compared to a farm; and of the monarch, it has been ſaid, that the ſovereignty over which he preſides is his property. But how can a kingdom with propriety belong to a ſingle individual? A property of ſuch a nature, evidently illuſory and fallacious, would exclude all others, and would be equally unjuſt and abſurd. We will, therefore, examine what this pretended property is. It cannot but be perceived that the monarch is at the head of the nation, but is not the nation; and that every thing is done in his name, but not by him: here is, therefore, an abuſe of the word *property*. An empire is neither an eſtate nor a farm, neither can it in the ſame way be ſold, divided, or communicated. Now, when a king

ſays,

ſays, *my kingdom*, he utters an abſurdity: he is the pilot, not the maſter of the veſſel.

All governments are mixed and ought to be ſo, ſince it is what ſaves them from deſtruction; and in every ſtate intermediate bodies are found. Where the human race is not utterly degraded, one ſevere edict may be dangerous: where many political contentions ariſe without an effuſion of blood, the ſenſation of liberty, be certain of it, is felt.

Such a ſtate appears tranquil, becauſe it is feeble and worn out. Parties, popular ſtorms, and contentions, occaſionally announce the vigor of the political body; while each power is in motion, and counterbalances the others. Such a kingdom thrives ſo long as the equilibrium is not deſtroyed to ſuch a degree as to occaſion violence.

How much did it not coſt deſpotiſm to enſlave the Strelits in Ruſſia, the Pretorian bands at Rome, and the Janiſſaries of Conſtantinople? And, notwithſtanding their final ſubjugation, each of theſe bodies frequently lorded it over its maſter.

So long as the ſpirit of a nation has not been completely ſubdued by oppreſſion; ſo long as it ſecretly proteſts againſt violence, there is ſtill ſomething to be hoped. But whenever the

national

national genius reconciles itſelf to the yoke of ſlavery,' all is over: the canker has found its way to the pith of the tree; and it muſt decay and fall to the ground.

Of what importance is it, whether the government be monarchical, republican, or democratic, provided it be juſt and moderate? The ſubjection, relatively to each individual, is in either caſe the ſame.

Let it be provided, that the ſovereign, the ſenate, or the council, ſhall not be inveſted with a deſpotical power over the life, property, and honour of the ſubjects; that the taxes ſhall not be augmented, nor the citizens baniſhed or retained by force unreaſonably: you may then leave the eſtabliſhment of forms to contingencies and events. A fanatical attachment to the word liberty, and a deſire to give to that term an unlimited extent, are, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, chimerical and abſurd.

Every authority is neceſſarily ſubject to reſtraint, even in ſtates where there are no written laws. The parliaments of France were wont to oppoſe the royal edicts; and the delay they occaſioned was a check on the ſtrides of deſpotiſm. In Germany it ſometimes occurs that no attention is paid to the imperial reſcripts.

Each ſtate, like each individual, has a phyſi-

ognomy

ognomy which, independently of names, announces either its healthy or diſeaſed condition. The ſtates of Italy, among others, contented with their repoſe, and diſqualified from figuring on the grand ſcene of the globe, to counterbalance the want of glory and grandeur, poſſeſs tranquility, peace, and even proſperity itſelf.

In the hiſtory of each government we find deſtiny, liberty, and neceſſity, inſtinct, genius, chance, and imitation. A belief of artificial bonds is entertained, while moſt frequently every thing is the work of ſimple nature.

Never can an enlightened nation be overwhelmed by an intolerable deſpotiſm. Such a nation put its religious laws to the teſt, and inveſtigates thoſe of its civil code: theſe it either ſpurns and covers with ridicule, or honours and approves.

PLEASANT ABUSE OF WORDS.

MEN in general are ſuch ſlaves to words, that naturaliſts themſelves, in deſcribing the white ants of Senegal, ſpeak of the king and queen, and almoſt go ſo far as to point out the captain of the guards. Conſult what has been ſaid of theſe marvellous ants, who conſtruct on

a large

a large ſcale buildings of from fifteen to twenty feet in height. You will there find the *king* and the *queen, who,* as the naturaliſt obſerves *when once they have entered their cells, are not permitted to abandon them.* Afterwards come the *ſoldier-ants*: they are formed for labour, and to them the labour is apportioned. The ants who view their toil compoſe the nobility.

I do not call in queſtion the buildings of theſe inſects; but when the naturaliſt takes upon him to dabble in *politics*, and employs fortuitouſly words engrafted on his memory, he falls into ridiculous errors. The inſect lodged in the centre apartment is the king, becauſe naturaliſts can form no other conception than that of a king at the head of a ſociety either of men or ants; and they add the queen, becauſe our kings of Europe are not eunuchs.

We have been told, ſeriouſly, then of the monarchy of the white ants, and of the monarch-inſect, the ſlave of his grandeur;—of the laborious ants, and the lazy ants; of the ſovereign ſhut up in his palace; and, laſtly, of the queen or common mother, by whom, with a ſingle male and different orders of ſubjects, the monarchy is conſtituted. In all this there is only one idea that is not exceptionable, that of beſtowing the appellation of ſoldiers on thoſe

whom

whom the naturaliſt obſerved to be engaged in labour, and the title of nobles on thoſe who did nothing. See to what we are led by the extreme abuſe of terms which are familiar to us. This is preciſely what has been done by certain political writers, who have entertained a ridiculous attachment to words: they have ſeen human ſociety on a large ſcale, with the ſame eye with which the naturaliſt has viewed the ant-hill.

The monarch of theſe writers ought to hold in his hands the third part of the property of the kingdom; for thus they have decided. According to them, this monarch exiſts in *the eſſential order of political ſocieties*. They can comprehend no other government: it is always the *monarch* with the mandatories of his *ſupreme, tutelar* and *beneficent*, authority; for theſe three epithets are inſeparably connected with their ſyſtem.

I hold them in the ſame eſteem with the theologian, who has aſſerted, that the political yoke was impoſed by the hand of God: but this is impoſſible; God has not made tyrants. It may be ſaid, *God has made republics*, with the ſame reaſon as that God has made deſpotic kings.

Let us ſpeak more rationally than our predeceſſors, and ſay, that when a government commits

mits great faults, a ſpeedy puniſhment enſues. Spain ſhackles the commerce of her colonies, which is excluſively carried on in veſſels belonging to the crown; and by this regulation the Engliſh poſſeſs themſelves of the produce of Mexico and Peru. The Portugueſe will neither apply themſelves to the cultivation of corn, nor encourage manufactures; and Portugal thus becomes dependent on Great Britain. Poland confines its navigation to veſſels which deſcends down the rivers to Dantzick with corn; and Dantzick becomes poſſeſſed of the commerce of Poland. France neglects her marine, her communications, her outlets, and her canals; and a peace diſgraceful to France enſues, by which the Engliſh, in 1763, ſecure to themſelves the half of America, and the commerce of India and Africa.

Providence is the firſt miniſter of France, ſaid a certain prelate, or, in other words, *that kingdom, by its maſs, its ſituation, and the character and induſtry of its inhabitants, will ſubſiſt, notwithſtanding all the faults of its adminiſtration.* It is becauſe there exiſts in France a national good ſenſe which repels whatever is inimical to the ſtate, and deprives of its efficiency all that is inconſiſtent with our manners and government.

 A *book,*

A *book*, a *bon mot*, a *happy repartee*, by each of these, imprudent counsels are impressed by great truths. Good sense in reality belongs to the mass of the nation, and resists whatever militates in the slightest degree against its reasonable or ancient usages. An attachment to their places prevents ministers from attempting daring innovations; while a popular clamour, energetically expressive of the sentiments of every good citizen, combats error and prejudices. From hence ensues the abandonment of erroneous systems; and ridicule completes the failure of rash projects.

In 1771, the French, by a gentle but persevering resistance, supported their magistrates, and in a manner obliged the sovereign to restore to them, according to the established forms which time had consecrated, the functions that had been unconstitutionally wrested from them. Several ministers have been removed by the public voice; and enterprises badly conceived, are not always carried into execution in this enlightened nation, which dreads not the fury of despotism, because it entertains a thorough persuasion, that there are several means of combating it and driving it to despair.

It may be said, on another hand, that the

legiſlative power reſides in the nation; while the king and ſenate can conſtitute the executive power alone. But if the nation be uncultivated and enveloped in the ſhades of ignorance, what legiſlation can it form? Inexperience and depravity are equally injurious to ſociety; and in ſuch a caſe it evidently follows, that either the king or the ſenate pronounces the law. When the ſovereignty is tulerary it is reſpected: when it is rapacious and violates all property, it is combated and contemned. Every government depends on the genius of the adminiſtrators.

The monarch, therefore, is at times inſtructed by the nation, which at other times he inſtructs. Inſtruction is at this æra an extra reſource to the ſovereign, it being eſſentially neceſſary to facilitate obedience.

Man was not created for error; and if the legiſlation be formed on evident principles, the reign of truth will be rapid in its progreſs.— Now, the maintenance of every aſſociation depends on the happineſs of thoſe who are connected in ſociety. To ſay that a kingdom is the patrimony of a monarch, is to revive, in an enlightened age, a cruel abſurdity.

A good government may be defined to be: *the art of providing for the wants of man in a ſtate of ſociety.* Nature has made theſe wants

 very

very ſimple: ſociety has redered them very numerous.

In a civilized ſtate there are two deſcriptions of men; the men of nature who dwell in the country, and the men of ſociety, the agents of induſtry, who are crouded together in the cities.

From theſe two ſources ariſes a third order of individuals, living at the expence of the other two orders, to ſecure a neceſſary liberty, and maintain tranquility in the larger aſſociations.

It follows that there exiſts a ſtrife between thoſe who enjoy themſelves in a ſtate of indolence, and thoſe who labour to procure theſe enjoyments.

In this calamitous poſition, more or leſs inſeparable from great ſocieties, what is the government to do? To hold out encouragement to thoſe who toil, and to cultivate the good will of thoſe who conſent to pay for their enjoyments. On this continual re-action the ſubſiſtence of men is founded; and an equal attention ought therefore to be paid to the two objects which concur towards it. To be perfectly acquainted with the two points by which commerce and agriculture are balanced, comprehends every ſecret of government: and this knowledge will enable the ſtateſman to determine

mine how far he may venture to extend the taxes, to keep ſtate penſioners in pay, and to multiply manufactures.

NATURE LAYS THE BASIS OF GOVERNMENT.

HUMAN ſocieties ſubſiſt leſs by the force of government, than by the force of nature, which neceſſarily lays the foundation of the political body, by the tendency all men have to live together, and to live in quiet. When the poverty of the citizens is pretty nearly equal, the paſſions have not that ferocity which ariſes from the prodigious complication of civil and moral conveniences, reſulting from numerous ſocieties where an inequality of fortunes demands laws of an extraordinary combination. It is then that philoſphy is, not without reaſon, ſurpriſed at ſeeing human ſocieties ſubſiſt, when three fourths of the individuals aſſembled together are abſolutely deſtitute of the good things the remaining portion enjoys. Nature, however, which wills that the ſmall number ſhall command, and the greater number obey, has ordained, that man in ſociety ſhall live under the dominion of primary cauſes, and that an im-

menſe population ſhall be ſubjected to a few men, becauſe men living together in ſociety have need of a government, and becauſe, as it is impoſſible in ſocieties that the members can be equal, the empire, whether it be that of force, of eloquence or of the arts, muſt be united in a few hands. Now, a great ſociety which is divided into a conſiderable number of others, and theſe again ſubdivided into a ſtill larger number, cannot ſubſiſt without a central point: unleſs for a predominating will, there can be no order and no harmony.

Nature therefore forms governments, and reflection completes the work. The laws reſiſt that conſtant fever of the mind which harraſſes mortals, and which would propel them to mutual attacks, unleſs for the inſtinct that is ſuperior to all combinations.—an inſtinct which gives to this one command, and impoſes on that one obedience. The elements of this firſt diſpoſition of nature are every where to be found; at the ſame time that we invariably perceive, in the moſt complicated of the political laws, that he who commands is not leſs bound to him who obeys, than is the latter to the inſtinct which founds his ſubmiſſion to the laws.

If the truth of theſe principles is not fully evinced by my reaſonings, I muſt have miſconceived,

ceived, not only the caufes, but alfo every hiftorical fact which appears to me to have refulted from them.

The art of governing has probably the fame origin with every other art, that is to fay, governments have arifen from natural fentiments. The earlieft political focieties were modelled after filial refpect; and the parternal government was thus formed into a national inftitution. Sudden leaps are as rare in the moral as in the phyfical world: man advances ftep by ftep. The Chinefe, copying nature, converted paternal authority into a public and national law, and the emperor obtained the appellation of *the father of the ftate*. To come, however, at all the force and vigour of this fentiment, we muft view man in that ifolated and favage ftate, in which his family fupplies in his eftimation, the place of the univerfe. In the tumult of focial life we can no longer confider the fovereignty as a paternal authority. Ah! who will be venturous enough to convert it into a principle of national government? The idea of contract and convention forming the code of natural rights, there is no longer any queftion of filial refpect towards the chief of the empire, but of obedience, as a tribute in return for the advantages he procures for the nation,

OF CERTAIN MODERN DOCTORS, ALREADY ANCIENTS.

THE writers on economics, in their wild jargon, ſpeak to us of the property of the monarch, on whom they beſtow the third part of the reveuues of the kingdom: but is not this pretended property, which they thus beſtow, the origin of every abuſe? Theſe writers have never dreamed of the political organization of a ſtate: they have made a ſovereign after their own faſhion, without perplexing themſelves by the conſideration that his authority might degenerate into deſpotiſm, through eternal attacks on perſonal property.

All human labours are, by the *natural order*, devoted to the profit of him who toils. One only of theſe labours can, however, be converted to the advantage of all the others, ſeeing that it alone is the ſource of every profit; and this labour is that of the cultivation of the earth, which creates whatever it draws above the expences advanced. Now, by way of ſaying that to cultivate the land is to create, and that this creation is the ſource of all the others, the above writers have fallen on the term *the neat produce*. Man cannot eat all the corn he grows; he muſt therefore diſpoſe of the *ſurplus* to ſupply ſome other

other of his wants ; and this ſurplus is the *neat produce.*" This ſcientific word would not have been brought into uſe, if the writers on œconomics had confined themſelves to the obſervation of very great antiquity, that it is the ſurplus of the growth over and above what ſuffices for the nouriſhment of a man, that nouriſhes other men. The *ſcience*, the *maſter*, the *liquid* produce, the *total* produce, and the *neat* produce ; this abſurd train of obſcure expreſſions reſembles the language employed by the great maſter of tongues, deſcribed by Moliere in his comedy of the *Bourgeois gentleman.*

Theſe *learned* writers ſee palpable demonſtrations of truth in the pages of their pamphlets, and the people die with hunger. Their ſyſtem, inſenſible and cold as death, is ſoon followed by a *royal edict*, the cruelty of which is authorized by their reaſonings, becauſe they favour the cupidity of the miniſters. Theſe enthuſiaſts and dupes, without being ſkilled in the ſcience of an atrocious government, have, notwithſtanding, openly pronounced that the *policy* ought not to be *changed*, while in its very nature it muſt be variable and fluctuating—a fact which theſe mercenary book makers have not been able to comprehend.

Law's ſyſtem, and that of the *writers on*

economics

economics have been equally fatal to France, through the immoderate abuſe that has been made of them: they have marked the *commencement* and the *cloſe* of the laſt reign (that of Louis XV.) by pretty nearly equal diſaſters.—Each of them had, nevertheleſs, its reaſonable point of view and its utility; but inſtead of modifying them, and accommodating them to circumſtances, in which caſe they would not have been injurious, the aim has been to render them inflexible.

The lamentations of ſenſible minds were lulled by the voice of theſe *new doctors*, proud of their ſpeculations on this ſubject. Although inſtructed by the experience of ſeveral *reigns*, they either did not, or would not perceive that their ſyſtem was violated, and militated againſt circumſtances. Irrefragable as ſo many theologians, they would not comprehend that the good is poiſoned, when the government, concentrated in a court, is not diſpoſed to receive it. Thus, in ſpite of all they demonſtrated upon paper, famine placed itſelf in the rear of their pamphlets. It was in vain for them to ſay, *what we pointed out has not been done*: the *idea* of their ſyſtem had been conceived, but as they were ignorant how to connect it with the preſent epoch, its miſchievous effects fell on the

people.

people. Now, as theſe writers, had they ſucceeded, would have divided the glory ariſing from the benefits they had conferred on the public, it is but reaſonable that they ſhould divide the ſcandal of their miſcarriage, and the curſes of a nation deprived by their reaſonings of *bread.*

It ſoon became expedient to recur to the policy of the moſt numerous portion (thoſe who had not been inſtructed in the ſchool of the maſter) to the *uſual* policy, which had from the commencement proſcribed not only extreme means, but alſo all thoſe viſions which one of our *wiſe* journaliſts publiſhed under the title of *Ephemerides.*

Nothing is more ſimple than polity, when the true elementary principles of that ſcience are reſorted to. A voice within us whiſpers to us, that men are ſo far equal as to be all of them entitled to the benefits of the earth, the common mother. The loftieſt deſpot entertains no doubt on this head; and if the legiſlative power were unceaſingly to lend an ear to this innate cry of ſentiment, all would be well: legiſlators would no longer proceed as if ſociety were founded on the annihilation of the rights of nature; and the murmurings which atteſt the ſufferings of the people would be attended to.

Syſtematical polity may have ſome advantages; but it muſt be acknowledged, that it may be employed equally by the adroit tyrant as by the legitimate ſovereign.

The number of the neceſſitous will be always proportioned to that of the individuals without property. The greater the population of a ſtate, the more numerous will the wretched be, if you do not introduce a perfectly unſhackled induſtry to partake of the benefits concentrated in privileged hands.

The maſs of riches being in every country neceſſarily limited, it is evident that there can be but a certain number of inhabitants in flouriſhing circumſtances: but in a ſtate where the law equally protects all kinds of *cultivation* and *induſtry*, the ſhades of difference, from the richeſt to the pooreſt, will be ſimple and gradually progreſſive.

In a ſtate which borders on its fulneſs of population, it therefore become extremely neceſſary that the government ſhould direct the internal commerce. The lot of the greater number of citizens being in ſuch a ſtate of ſociety extremely rigorous, it is otherwiſe to be dreaded, that the articles eſſential to life may not be ſufficient for the ſupport of thoſe who are at once dependant on the bad years and the caprice

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of the rich; and as famine drives the lower claſs of the people to deſpair, the government ſhould not expoſe the exiſtence of that claſs to illuſory ſyſtems, and incur the riſk of having to encounter popular inſurrections. Let the commodities in queſtion be at all times equalized, and tranquillity will be maintained in ſpite of all that pſeudo politicians can advance.

Let the government have conſtantly in its view this eſtabliſhed truth, that the richeſt citizen pays not dearer for his bread, his wine, and his meat, than the pooreſt individual of the ſtate: it will then feel the neceſſity of not augmenting the inequality of conditions, by abandoning to chance and cupidity the commerce of indiſpenſable articles. To do ſo would be to augment in a thouſand ways the moſt terrible impoſt that can be levied on the people.

At Athens, thoſe whoſe land did not yield two hundred meaſures of grain paid nothing to the ſtate. It is not true that the impoſt, becauſe it is a ſacrifice of a part of his wealth made by the individual to ſecure the reſt, ought to be paid alike by all in proportion to what they poſſeſs. The people pay by their hands, by public labours of every deſcription, by the dangers to which they expoſe themſelves in all perilous trades, and by the workmen and ſol-

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diers they inceſſantly ſupply in their own perſons, and in thoſe of their children. Thus the direct effect of the ſenſible law of Athens above cited, was to reſpect *little fortunes*, at the ſame time abſorbing, through the impoſt, a part of the opulence of the rich.

To take from thoſe who have no real property a part of their perſonal acquiſitions, is to make them pay a double tax. They have from their birth been the ſlaves of the ſociety, which impoſes on them the weightieſt burthens; and to take from them a part of their ſpecie, is to ſnatch from them, not a legitimate tribute, but a neceſſary part of their ſubſiſtence. They pay the taxes by their labours and daily ſervices; and when they ſurrender up their life for a ſmall ſalary, if the value of the articles of common conſumption is not on that account diminiſhed in proportion to their indigence, there cannot but be an injuſtice, ſince their laborious days, conſtantly expoſed, are the moſt efficacious tribute they can offer to their country.

The government ought to adopt the moſt rigorous meaſures to prevent the ſtate from being deprived of the articles of its own growth. To exchange food for money, more eſpecially when the population is conſiderable, is to order a great part of the inhabitants to diminiſh their conſumption,

ſumption, and to condemn them to the penalty of want. When induſtry has fertilized the earth, are the lives of men to be in a manner exported, to ſatisfy the cupidity of a few ſpeculators, who barter for gold the ſubſiſtance of the laborious claſſes of ſociety?

The commerce which deprives the ſtate of uſeful articles for ſuperfluities, is perhaps a dangerous one: it certainly facilitates the growth of dangerous monopolies. When the maſs of ſilver is equal to the general wants, it is always ſufficient.

Common ſenſe alone, for it requires nothing more, muſt convince us that what the harveſt yields of ſuperfluous ought to be reſerved againſt famine. But liſten to the writers on economics:—they will give you a thouſand plauſible, but bad reaſons, to prove to you that it is at all times expedient, without any reſtriction whatever, to exchange with our neighbours *corn* for *ſpecie*. The latter, they ſay, will improve our lands: this certainly looks well upon paper; but good ſenſe, which has not ventured ſo far in its reſearches, has, at length, obliged us to acknowledge, that the ſurplus of the harveſt belongs either to the immediate population, or that of the adjacent province, and that to remove

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it to a greater diſtance is equally dangerous and unjuſt.

Thus thoſe on whom the title of *writers on economics (économiſtes)* has been beſtowed, have not made the greateſt progreſs in the economical ſcience. They have ſpoken in the firſt place of an *evidence* which was to carry conviction to the minds of all, and this pretended evidence is entirely made up of obſcurities or common ideas, cloathed in a pompous jargon. Their barbarous language, their myſterious obſcurity, has not procured for theſe new oracles all the ſectaries they expected: the phantom of *evidence*, that univerſal deſpot, they brought forward, has not reſtrained the ambitious monopolizer's paſſion for gain; while the unbridled love of luxury and jobbing has braved the truths which they ſaid were as demonſtrable as the exacteſt calculation.

They have miſconceived the moral order on which the phyſical order repoſes. They have preſumed that the latter would ſuffice; and, loſing ſight of the expediency of tempering and directing the human heart, have neglected to purify the virtues in their ſanctuary. They have abuſed the excellent principle of liberty, by endeavouring, in the firſt place, to render it indefinite,

indefinite, and afterwards applying it to objects of the first necessity, in a covetous age, and under an avaricious government. They have represented to the people the necessity of their exporting their corn, which they were not at the same time sure of replacing: the exhaustion was speedy, the replacement slow. Their unique and territorial impost, the idea of which, however, they have borrowed, would be admirable, although far less perfect than the tythe of Vauban with which they have found fault, provided every other abuse was reformed: but they have failed to perceive, that nothing was borrowed from their system unless what could satisfy the cupidity of individuals, and that the truths from which no private advantage could be drawn were ridiculed and condemned. The economical science, which was to perfect the legislation of the universe, has been productive of far more mischief than good, because it has not accommodated its principles to circumstances.

The terror with which the imagination of the people is inspired by the unlimited exportation of corn is to be taken into the account. It is sometimes kindled up without a cause; but I ask, are the people wrong? Can they have read the pamphlets, and heard the dissertations *pro* and

and *con*, weighing the one againſt the other? Food is dearer to man than his life, for this reaſon, that he feels hunger, but is ſenſible neither of life nor death. It is alſo dearer to him than liberty; and for theſe reaſons, the terrible apprehenſion of famine muſt be baniſhed. As the people conſtantly dread *monopoly*, which they have ſeen carried to an exceſſive pitch, do not be ſurpriſed if their terrors are awakened by exportation: where there is error, the life of man is endangered.

According to ſome, France grows a little more corn than ſhe conſumes; and according to others, does not produce a ſufficient quantity to ſupport her population: for, notwithſtanding our ſelf-ſufficiency and preſumption, which will not allow us to entertain any ſort of doubts, we are extremely ignorant on eſſential points. Be it as it may, France has recourſe to the Neapolitans and Sicilians, as well as to Africa; and this ſeems to prove that our crops are not equal to our wants. Direct your view towards la Beauce, that province which produces ſuch fine corn: well! more than the one half of its inhabitants eat black bread. Why is corn to be exported, when in ſeveral of our provinces not the fourth part of the inhabitants have bread ſufficient to ſatisfy the calls of nature? Let us

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import corn from the United States of America, and give in exchange our wine, olive, oil, and fruits. The agricultural people in France groan under a heavy weight of imposts, and must be allowed the benefit of a more advantageous culture to pay the collectors.

Instead of selling corn to foreigners, let us purchase it of them, and let France imitate the good rural mother, who will not suffer her infant to be at any time without a slice of bread in its hand, should it even not be eaten, but thrown on the ground to feed the chickens.

We will now take a view of our colonies. Hear the cries of St. Domingo, where the inhabitants complain of the excessive price, the scarcity, and the bad quality of the meal they import. Let us carry American corn to the French sugar islands, and let us turn a deaf ear to the writers who have reduced us to a half-famished state, who are ignorant that men follow the articles essential to their support, and that the exportation of corn is attended by the emigration of the inhabitants.

Finally, may the exportation of corn, at all times wisely limited, afford the cultivator every advantage to which he is entitled, without, at the same time, exposing to want, or inspiring with a terror equivalent to a famine, the nu-

merous consumers of a kingdom, the metropolis of which is situated at a great distance from the sea coasts.

The writers on economics have more especially displeased me on this account, that they have chosen to express themselves in undefined terms. The spirit of the sect has made them haughty in their mode of thinking, and in their discourses sententious and abrupt; while their pedantry has lost them the esteem of every sensible man, of all those who detest a fastidiousness either of conduct or phrase. When the question of the commerce of corn is agitated, they will allow no restraint whatever: monopoly takes the advantage of their doctrines, by which individual cupidity is flattered, and on them falls all the odium of the mischiefs that have resulted from the proclamation of a *general freedom of export*. Instead of giving a new turn to their system, instead of acknowledging the calamities by which, in the first instance, it had been followed up, they have stood their ground with all the pertinaciousness of logical disputants, and have contended against the urgent remonstrances of famished France.

These new doctors, who would needs have their opinions, for the greater part obscure, to be so many infallible guides, and whom the public

public mind, in its early effervefcence, venerated like ancient legiflators, annexing to each of them the ftamp and phyfiognomy of a Solon or a Lycurgus, were only entitled to dictinction by their obfcurity, their political jargon, impudent quackery, obftinacy, bad ftile, and ridiculous emphafis. Out of their fect, according to themfelves, there was neither talent, reafon, nor difcernment; and the economical principles were to fway Europe and the whole world.

Shortly, however, a juft appreciation of thefe principles, extremely difficult of adoption, gave rife to that difdain which punifhes the enthufiafm of fectaries; and the new fchool was effectually humbled by the well merited contempt of every real philofopher. Not that all their ideas were falfe or badly founded, but becaufe they had imprudently promulged them without being themfelves acquainted with the tendency of their collective application, and ftill lefs with the confequences that would refult from them. They were ftrictly and literally political charlatans.

By thefe writers every old image has been revived. According to them the *king* is the *father* of the monarchy, *a father of a family*; and his fubjects no other than adult *children*. They have whirled round in a badly defcribed circle,

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and have ſeen but one conſtitution, the *monarchical* ſtate. Never have local circumſtances either caught their eye or engaged their attention.

COMMERCE OF CORN.

OUGHT or ought not the free commerce of corn to be allowed? This important queſtion, indeed the moſt important of all political queſtions, becauſe it concerns the ſupport of every citizen, has been under diſcuſſion for theſe twenty-five or thirty years paſt. Without entering into the reaſonings adduced by the defenders of the opinions on either ſide, I ſhall confine myſelf to a few obſervations which appear to me to be deciſive, and to merit the moſt ſerious attention.

It certainly belongs to the earth to nouriſh its population; and it is equally certain, that a monarch whoſe territory ſhould conſiſt of ſandy plains, wild heaths, and deſerts, would be but a paltry ſovereign. Midas, who converted whatever he touched into gold, and who carried at his fingers' ends mines ſtill richer than thoſe of Potoſi, was the moſt unhappy of men. Was not

not Rome, that queen of the world, in the moſt wretched ſtate imaginable, when Sextus Pompeius prohibited the landing of corn in the Italian ports from Sicily, Egypt, and the coaſt of Africa? His citizens, greater than kings, were far more wretched than the meaneſt peaſant who has bread at his command, and would gladly have exchanged their royalty for a few meaſures of corn.

The beſt and moſt powerful of empires is unqueſtionably therefore that which has the moſt fertile ſoil, and which nouriſhes the greateſt number of inhabitants. But of what import is the amount of the population, which in France, for inſtance, exceeds twenty millions of men, that inhabits and cultivates a fertile ſoil, if the corn it grows is not for itſelf? Now, this corn is certainly not for thoſe who grow it, at the ſame time that their exiſtence becomes abſolutely precarious, and at the mercy of their enemies, or of a company of merchants, provided the commerce of corn is allowed. Nothing is eaſier than to prove this, and to carry the demonſtration to evidence itſelf: but that nothing may be wanting to this end, I ſhall put a few preliminary queſtions.

1. What is the number of the inhabitants of France? how many foreigners are reſident

there? and how many ſeptiers* of wheat are required for the nouriſhment of all? Of theſe facts we are at preſent ignorant.

2. What corn do we require for our colonies? is their population preciſely known? have thoſe who inhabit them been faithfully numbered? Here again we are in the dark.

3. How much corn is employed in articles of paſty, in the nouriſhment of animals, &c. &c.? We know nothing of all this.

4. What number of ſeptiers of corn do our harveſts on an average yield? and how many are employed as ſeeds? We are ignorant ſtill.

5. Does France produce more corn than is neceſſary for its own conſumption, or does it not produce enough? No one can ſay with any preciſion. According to ſome, ſhe grows a fifth more than ſhe conſumes; and, according to others, an inſufficient quantity, inſomuch, that ſhe is obliged to draw ſupplies from Sicily, and the coaſt of Barbary. Now, I aſk how, in the midſt of all this uncertainty, we are to judge with any determinate preciſion?

If it were certain that we had a million ſeptiers of corn, more than is ſufficient for the nouriſhment of the inhabitants, I ſhould ſay

* The ſeptier contains twelve buſhels.

that

that we might then allow the free exportation of that quantity, provided it were to be drawn from the provinces by which it was produced: for were it to be taken, for example, from a ſouthern province, which has not produced a quantity ſufficient for its own nouriſhment, that wretched province, as well as the ſurrounding ones, would be ſtarved, ſeeing that the miſchief gaining more and more ground, the ſcarcity would have time to commit its ravages before ſuccour could be brought from the northern province. I muſt here obſerve, that the exportation of meal ſhould be preferred, becauſe the bran in that caſe would at leaſt be ours, and our millers would be the gainers.

Thoſe who have written upon corn, and more eſpecially the partizans of liberty, have, for the greater part, entertained mercantile ideas: they would be excellent patriots at Lucca or Raguſa. But is the regimen of a great kingdom, ſuch as France, ſimilar to that of the republic of Saint Marino?

If you have only a ſufficient quantity of corn, keep it: if you have not enough, purchaſe. If you have ſomewhat too much, ſtore up the ſurplus: you are tenacious enough of your gold, and why not be equally ſo of your corn, which is far more eſſential, ſince the life of

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man, and above all of the man who labours, and who conſtitutes the true riches of the kingdom, ſince the love of the country and humanity, ſince the ſafety of the ſtate is dependant on it ?

To ſell corn without knowing whether there is ſufficient for home conſumption, is, not to ſpeak too harſhly, an imprudence which no great nation ought ever to conſent to: to diſpoſe of the bread of its children is a horrible crime which ſhould not ſtain the name of any country. The citizen owes to the country his blood; and will it not in return ſacrifice to him the cupidity of a few individuals? Is the ſociety any other than the obligation of all the individuals to concur towards the general ſafety and proſperity ?

If there are good years, there are alſo indifferent and bad ones. In the good years there may perhaps be no great room for apprehenſion; but in the indifferent and bad ones, who will take upon him to ſay, that the Engliſh and the rich Hollanders will not unite and deprive us of our corn ? Forty or fifty millions of livres dexterouſly remitted, and diſtributed in the places adjacent to the provinces where the crops ſhall have particularly failed, will carry alarm and deſolation throughout. Our poor fellow citizens

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will perifh through hunger; and our enemies will in the event carry out of the kingdom twice the capital they embarked in the adventure a few months before. The French merchants will themfelves augment the mifchief; and the greedy farmer will be in no hafte to fell, finding that he can derive an advantage from the public mifery.

Corn is befides a commodity too neceffary to be entrufted and abandoned to the combinations of merchants devoid of any principle, and thirfting after gain: thefe are unfortunately, in a rich country, fuch as France, by far too numerous. It is placing in their hands the life of the poor; and we know that the fafety of the people ought to be the fupreme law.

It may be added, that corn is of too great a bulk, and the freight of it too coftly, not to fwallow up the profits which can legally arife from its exportation to a foreign market, even when it is purchafed at the cheapeft rate: fuch a traffic can therefore only be advantageous when the article is re-fold to the nation from which it has been drawn. It confifts then in reality merely of foreftallings ruinous to the people, and becomes a pure jobbing, inftead of being an efficient branch of commerce. Poland is differently circumftanced; but what are Poland,

Egypt,

Egypt, and the coaſt of Barbary? are they to furniſh an example to France? Sicily and England are iſlands without provinces in the Mediterranean; and what they do in this reſpect proves nothing.

Colbert, who has been ſo ſeverely handled by our modern political empirics, diſplayed much ſagacity when he obliged each province of France to ſupply itſelf. That great man, who well knew the thoughtleſſneſs of the French people, and who was apprehenſive that the cultivation of corn, the true riches of the ſtate, might yield to that of the vine, tobacco, &c. or to the planting of wood, prohibited the mutual ſuccour of the different provinces. By this expedient they were obliged to grow corn equivalent to their nouriſhment; and it may be affirmed, that Colbert, in this way, rendered the moſt important ſervice to his country and agriculture, notwithſtanding he has, according to our modern doctors, done quite the contrary.

It is unneceſſary to add, that when corn was wanted in any one of the provinces, that ſtateſman took care to be at hand with a ſupply. The foreign purchaſes he made of that article at the commencement of his miniſtry, and the ovens he conſtructed at the Louvre for the uſe of the people, ſufficiently evince the reſpect he enter-

entertained for the laborious clafs to whom we owe all our enjoyments.

Colbert's adminiftration on this fcore was the more fagacious, becaufe he at the fame time paid a particular attention to the manufactures which have extended and enriched our commerce. If the cultivation of wheat had been neglected, no doubt can be entertained but that manual labour, become too dear, would have given a mortal blow to our manufactories. To the end that we may either rival or excel foreign nations, the indifpenfable articles of life muft be fo cheap as to render the workman's daily wages low.

Sully, under a monarch who was truly the father of his people, is celebrated for the protection he afforded to agriculture; while Henry the Great, on his part, is celebrated for having eftablifhed, contrary to the opinion of Sully, certain manufactories: it has been faid, not without reafon, that the latter had a clearer fight than his minifter. Colbert has happily blended the great aim of each; and Colbert has notwithftanding been blamed.

But when fuch a fyftem is purfued, what becomes of liberty?

No one can be more fenfible than I am, that liberty is the foul of commerce, which reftraint kills;

kills: but what liberty is that which muſt neceſſarily lead to the ruin of the country? Is the farmer not free, becauſe he is deprived of the power of ſtarving the unfortunate peaſants who work for him? If liberty is to be made the inſtrument of homicide, ſlavery is certainly an hundred times preferable.

Since, however, the freedom of the cultivator is ſo much contended for, it appears to me that that of the poor labourer ſhould not have been left out of the account, ſince it is he who bedews the earth with the ſweat which falls from his brow. What would become of the former unleſs for the toil of the latter? I recollect a period when the laborious claſs gained a comfortable livelihood by weaving, and refuſed to quit their looms for the plough-ſhare, until at length they were conſtrained to do ſo by an *edict* of the parliament of the province. Now, who has the greateſt reaſon to complain of the want of liberty, the farmer or the peaſant? Why were there not on that occaſion, remonſtrances in favour of the liberty of the people?

Beſides, what is here meant by the words *liberty* and *property*? To whom does France belong? To its own inhabitants, or to the inhabitants of Germamy? Or is it the birth-right of the French, or that of the people of Algiers?

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It is the country of Frenchmen of every deſcription—it is their mother, and is bound to nouriſh them. As ſurely as the ſoil is theirs, ſo are the fruits and productions it ſupplies; and to theſe they have unqueſtionably the firſt right.

Now what becomes of this right, of this property, if foreigners diſpute it with them? And why does the cultivator call on the huſbandman to conſume his fruit, his eggs, his butter, his cheeſe, his turkies, his hay, his barley, &c. &c. and refuſe to enter into a commerce with him for the moſt indiſpenſable article of life? The latter rids him of articles which he cannot export; and it becomes the more his duty, through a motive of gratitude, that he ſhould ſell to the other the only commodity that can bear exportation.

But, after all, is it true, that the culture finds an advantage in the freedom of export? I ſay the *culture*, or the tillage, and not the *cultivator*, for particular care ought to be taken to diſtinguiſh them. In the tillage I ſee the nobleſt and firſt of arts: in the cultivator I can recognize merely a kind of mercenary, who obtains from an intendant or a proprietor, for a certain pecuniary conſideration, permiſſion to work and enrich himſelf. Culture is our common mother; while the farmer is no other than a

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ſimple citizen, who earns his bread as moſt other citizens do.

Were the land in France to be the property of the cultivator, he would without doubt gain in proportion as corn ſhould be dearer, or his lands better cultivated: but in the preſent ſtate of things, I can perceive, that the dearer corn is the more the rent of farms is enhanced. The farmer who has enriched himſelf, when he finds that his rent is raiſed, quits his farm and lives on his ſavings. His wretched ſucceſſor torments, fatigues, vexes, and exhauſts the land to make it bring more than it will bear. If the corn continues to be ſold, at what in the phraſe of the writers on economics is termed a *good price*, he pays his landlord, and contrives to ſupport himſelf. If on the contrary it ſells for leſs than this pretended *good price*, the farm is half ruined, and the cultivator wholly ſo. Thus can nothing, according to my opinion, be more diſaſtrous than this fine ſyſtem.

Let me conclude. To act ſagaciouſly on ſo nice an occaſion, I maintain that the firſt ſtep ought to be, to determine with preciſion, how many individuals there are in France, and how many ſeptiers of corn are produced on an average yearly. As ſuch an inveſtigation appears to be far too arduous for our national levity, it is proba-

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ble that there will be a confiderable lapfe of time before we fhall be enabled to afcertain whether we have too much, or too little corn, whether we ought, or ought not to fell. And as fuch an experiment, fhould it fail, would infallibly be fatal to the exiftence of a number of citizens, and would ruin many others, I am of opinion that it would be wife, and above every other confideration humane, to feek every means by which fo difaftrous an error may be fhunned.

It alfo ftrikes me, that the price of corn ought never to be fixed.

Firft, becaufe the proprietor having it at his option, either to let or refufe his farm at fuch or fuch a price, the farmer ought alfo to be free to give his commodity at fuch or fuch another price; and this is the liberty which is his due. But as the man who labours and endures fatigues is a Frenchman, as well as the nobleman who does nothing, or the lawyer who multiplies ftamps upon paper—as this indigent individual is truly the child of the earth, fince by him the earth is fertilized, the leaft he has to expect is that her productivenefs fhould fupport him. Thus ought care to be taken, by a wife circumfpection, that on the one hand, bread fhall not be too dear for the poor, and on the other hand, that it fhall not be fold at fo

low a price as to diſtreſs and ruin the cultivator. Again, as the lower claſs can live at a ſmall expence, manual labour ſhould not be too well paid: and this latter regulation would make our manufactures flouriſh, and preſerve good order.

I am therefore of opinion, ſecondly, that the price of the ſeptier of wheat may vary from fifteen to thirty livres: the poor man and the cultivator will each of them find the benefit of it, according as the price ſhall be more or leſs diſtant from theſe two extremes. Our commerce would infallibly feel the benefit of ſuch a plan. And,

Thirdly, I am finally of opinion that the municipal bodies ought to be enjoined to collect and ſtore up this commodity whenever it ſhall be ſold at a very low price. This expedient ought to be entered on with much prudence and circumſpection. If France could one day ſucceed in ſtoring up in magazines a ſupply of corn for about half a year, I think that the exportation which has crazed ſo many heads might then be allowed. Indeed, as ſoon as bread ſhould become exceſſively dear, it would be merely neceſſary to ſhut the ports, and open the granaries. The merchants and ſpeculators would then find themſelves in the predicament

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of ſelling at a loſs, and would be very careful in future how they ſhould engage in ſo precarious a commerce; and France having ſtored up an abundance ſufficient to provide againſt every emergency, the purſes of the ſpeculators would not be weighty enough to purchaſe ſuch a quantity of corn, as could produce the diſaſtrous conſequences by which alone they can be enriched.

TRADING SOCIETIES.

THE ſpirit of national induſtry was the principle which actuated Holland. In ſuch a ſtate the people eaſily miſtake a wiſh to mend their fortunes for a lively attachment to the maintenance of the conſtitution. Religious, civil, and economical liberty conſtantly flouriſhes in trading ſocieties, on this account that the ſole attention of the ſtate is occupied by the preſervation of public credit. A trading company evinces how far the combinations of the ſpirit of commerce can be carried. The Eaſt-India company exerciſes all the rights of ſovereignty on the coaſt of Malabar, and in the India ſeas. Here then are merchants who exerciſe a real deſpotiſm, but who in their intercourſe with each other adhere to the laws of diſtributive juſtice.

The eſtabliſhment of this company is no burthen to the ſtate, the expences of which it rather ſerves to leſſen.

Political induſtry has beſides undertaken to direct the ſpirit of private intereſt. The latter conſtantly giving to the human mind a vigorous impulſion, the ſtate ought not to trench on its natural privilege, nor to feel the ſmalleſt portion of jealouſy at the riches and power of a company of merchants, who, while they are undiſtinguiſhed merchants at home, are ſuffered to be the ſovereigns of India. The independence of the ſtate has nothing to dread from commercial men, who by the union of their credit and riches add to its ſtrength.

The Dutch merchants were regarded as their deliverers, by the Indians wearied with the haughty domination of the Portugueſe and Spaniards. This is what enabled the former to eſtabliſh and fortify themſelves without difficulty in every part of India: they had rather to combat the jealouſy of the Europeans, than the combinations of the Indians.

The obſervations I now make reſpecting commercial companies, are founded on the preſent ſtate of things: ſo far as regards my own individual opinion, I am very far from approving of

of the mode in which theſe companies have been formed. The principle of them is invariably bad; and it is highly repugnant to reaſon and good ſenſe, that ſovereign authority ſhould be placed in the hands of a merchant, or of a clerk—and that a throne ſhould be erected in a ſhop or writer's office.

Theſe rajahs, with a clothier's yard for a ſceptre, notwithſtanding all the riches they poſſeſs, excite my pity. It is a profanation of the ſovereignty to divide it into ſo many hands, to ſubject it to the caprices of a company of merchants, and to convert it into an inſtrument to ſatisfy their cupidity. Royalty is made to command, not to be a ſlave: it ſhould wear a crown, and not roll caſks of pepper; its balance ſhould weigh the intereſts of nations, not gums and canella. I am an emperor, ſaid Theophilus to his wife Theodora, and you make me a pilot of a galley. He was perfectly in the right, ſince it is not becoming in a ſovereign, who is the father and guardian of the laws, to ſubmit to any degree of degradation. What ſubject would wiſh to treat with the clerks of him who is ſuperior to the law? What would beſides become of the people, if the prince were to employ the public revenues and the ſovereignty in commerce? and would not commerce itſelf be annihilated?

If Solomon ſent a fleet to Ophir, he did it as a monarch, not as a merchant: he wiſhed to excite the emulation of his people, and to encourage their induſtry; to clear for them a road, not to diſpute one with them. If the Medici employed commerce for their elevation, they did not deſcend from ſovereignty to become merchants.

I am an advocate for a company, ſince for a very diſtant traffic a company is neceſſary: I am of opinion, that it ſhould enjoy an excluſive privilege, ſince otherwiſe it cannot flouriſh; but I think that this company ought to be united with the ſovereign and the nation. This junction is not ſo impracticable as may be apprehended, and I can take upon me to aſſert, that it would be pre-eminently juſt, and far more perfect than any of the preſent companies.

By this wiſe mean, brought to its true point of ſimplicity, the monarch would preſerve in an integral ſtate the right of commanding, which does and muſt belong to him alone. The excluſive privilege, which can at the moſt be granted to the authors of certain new inventions, and that only for a time, but which will always be repugnant when granted by the ſovereign to a few individuals, to the excluſion and detriment of almoſt the whole of his people,

who have the ſame claims on his bounty, the excluſive privilege, I ſay, would no longer be either unjuſt or revolting, ſince the whole nation might and would effectually participate in its advantages. On its ſide, the company would uncontrovertibly be more perfect, richer, more powerful, and more juſt than any of thoſe that now exiſt. It would at the ſame time belong to the king and his people, ſo as to fulfil all the conditions required by the ſtricteſt juſtice, the ſacred rights of ſovereignty, and thoſe not leſs ſacred ones of the people, whom a monarch ought at no time to exclude from his beneficence, ſince he has been ſo often repreſented emblematically as the ſun, which warms every human being, and diſpenſes his light indiſcriminately to all.

The treaties on commerce without exception, and all the diſſertations on the object of this chapter, the offspring of the puzzled brain of ſhort-ſighted politicians, reſolve every thing into this one word, liberty. Merchants burn your parchments; your conventions are ridiculous: let each pay according to his own fancy, and each will be rich; for no one willingly embraces poverty, and no one knows better than he who contracts what is meet for him.

Spain, to cement her grandeur, has, in a

manner, converted South America into a desert, and has destroyed nearly the whole of the old inhabitants: she has held it more expedient to murder than to civilize them, to destroy than to govern them. The consequence has been, that, after the lapse of a short period, she found herself in possession of an immense, but devastated, country; of abundance of valuable productions, without hands to collect them; and of inexhaustible treasures, without those who should explore them in the bowels of the earth.

To possess gold and silver, she has destroyed what is far more precious—men. She has in the issue been obliged to depopulate herself to repeople her conquests, to purchase at a prodigious expence the human species she had before annihilated without knowing its utility, and to substitute for men polished and civilized, such as were the Mexicans and Peruvians,—to men under the controul of princes, laws, and religion, the negroes she has been obliged to purchase and transport at a prodigious expence from the coast of Africa to America.

Thus has she destroyed, first the conquered country, and afterwards the one by which it was subjugated. Vain of her treasures, she would not take the trouble to give them a real stamp of value by commerce, but surrendered

the advantages ſhe might have derived from them, to other nations which, by their induſtry, have made them theirs: ſhe ſaw nothing but the mines; the men eſcaped her notice. She was ſoon afterwards obliged with the greater part of her mines to purchaſe men.

Holland, on the contrary, in a territory either diſcovered or conquered, firſt ſought men and commerce; afterwards gold and valuable commodities. Deſirous to be the ſole poſſeſſor of certain precious articles, ſpices, ſhe did not deſtroy the inhabitants of the regions that produce theſe ſpices, but obliged them to root up a part of the trees that bear them. It was not her aim to be the ſovereign of ſo vaſt a territory, but merely to poſſeſs in it a powerful eſtabliſhment, viewing the inhabitants as neighbours and friends, not as ſlaves. Humanity revolts at ſlavery, and inſenſibly accuſtoms itſelf to the neighbourhood of people who have altogether different manners, different laws, and different gods. And is not this proximity itſelf the work of nature? In her foreign ſettlements, Holland is ſecurely eſtabliſhed by fortreſſes, and has contracted alliances: her plan has been to render herſelf the arbitreſs, not the ſovereign; and ſhe has left her friends, the aborigines, in

poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of their princes, their laws, and their religion.

She has thus been the preſerver of men, and conſequently of the wants of men, of thoſe wants which conſtitute commerce. She has taken their commodities, and has given them her own in exchange; ſhe has ſupplied the inhabitants of Europe with the productions of Aſia, and thoſe of Aſia with the productions of Europe; ſhe has clad Aſia with the manufactures of Europe, and Europe with the manufactures of Aſia; and, ſovereign arbitreſs of all theſe exchanges, ſhe has rendered herſelf the general commercial agent of the known world, the centre of commerce, and conſequently of wealth, and the channel through which all the riches of the four quarters of the globe neceſſarily paſs.

OF CERTAIN CANTONS STILED REPUBLICAN.

HOW ſtrangely terms are abuſed! I have ſeen cantons ſtiled republican *, abandoned to all the luxury of monarchies, and the baſeneſs of deſpotical governments. Nothing republican

* Berne, Fribourg, Lucerne ,Soleure, Geneva, &c.

can be found in them unleſs the name they carry; their precepts are the moſt rigid poſſible, and corruption has its fulleſt ſcope and triumph, while the uſages are altogether contrary to the ſpirit of the old conſtitution. Theſe little cities hold out to the view a cupidity covered by the ſlighteſt maſk; and it is a matter of utter aſtoniſhment to obſerve and contemplate a city containing ten thouſand ſouls, which not long ſince diſplayed the fineſt and moſt heroical ſentiments, univerſally infected by a leaven of ſervitude.

Thus do new manners ſuddenly found a new conſtitution. It is no longer a republic, in which a multiplicity of ſprings produce an *unique* movement; it is the claſs of the rich, who more or leſs oppreſs that of the poor; and the latter merit their fate, ſince they, in the firſt place, ſold themſelves, and afterwards put too high a price on their dependance.

Riches introduced into a ſmall republic change its inſtitutions: they are at leaſt the principal cauſe of the metaphyſico-political jargon we obſerve, and which thoſe whom it concerns alone refuſe to ſee, to exculpate themſelves from a charge of obſtinacy and voluntary error.

In theſe republics the popular aſſemblies are tumultuous in the extreme, and of no efficacy

in their deliberations : prejudices founded on the vileſt habits maintain in them their aſcendancy, while the public utility is conſulted by no general view. What irrefragably proves that the ſmall number* ought to rule the great, is that humanity is never leſs conſulted than in very numerous aſſemblies, where the paſſions maintain a ſtrife, and ſecret enmities are fomented. To the end that any thing beneficial may reſult from the deliberations of theſe large aſſemblies, it is neceſſary that two or three individuals ſhould by a reſolute tone command the reſt : it is not the number which decides, but a few men of a vigorous temperament of mind; and it unfortunately occurs moſt frequently, that to this aſcendancy of talent an intriguing and dangerous ſpirit is annexed.

A multitude is frequently aſſembled to pronounce an opinion on what it does not underſtand ; and it is fortunate in ſuch a caſe if the good ſenſe of a ſingle individual decides more juſtly than the aggregate maſs of citizens could have done ; for the many are not fitted to weigh public affairs.

When a large aſſemblage has to determine on

* By the *ſmall number*, I wiſh always to be underſtood the *repreſentative government*.

what

what belongs to ſlow reflection, the mind of each individual is heated, and the true point of view is loſt. Can the multitude daily examine into the defective parts of the political machine? Will it ſeek out, will it make choice of agents always in a capacity to fill up the deficiencies? Will it call to mind the events by which the principles ought to be changed? Will it ſo conſult times and ſeaſons as to avoid confuſion? and, laſtly, Will it maintain a certain equilibrium between all the parts?

If it is become the practice of modern governments to do every thing by letters, by which audiences, journies, and a profuſion of unneceſſary words are diſpenſed with; if the language of the adminiſtration ought to be firm and preciſe, can this knowledge be expected from a large aſſembly in which each individual muſt needs have ſomething to ſay, and which entruſts the moſt important ſecrets to a confuſed and heterogeneous multitude.

The people ſhould have repreſentatives: for their own ſecurity they ought not to act for themſelves.

Popular aſſemblies are ſtrangers to reaſon, and know not pity. They ſupport an injuſtice in the firſt inſtance by that obſtinacy, which is the leading characteriſtic of an ignorant croud.

In theſe aſſemblies two or three individuals ſhelter themſelves behind the reſt, and, confident of impunity, haraſs and oppreſs their fellow citizens: as they are diſpenſed from any juſtification of the meaſures they direct, from any public inveſtigation, they become infinitely more brutal, daring, and wicked, than if they could be called on to juſtify their conduct as ſimple individuals.

OF THE LANGUAGE OF LAWS.

IT is always adviſeable that a law ſhould illuſtrate itſelf. It muſt command obedience; but ought to avoid an imperious tone, eſpecially when it emanates from a ſingle man. We love to ſee the monarch reſpect the power of written reaſon, and explain the motives of a new decree. We are unwilling to believe that the preamble of an edict is only a ſnare of oratory; and as nothing more effectually exalts the majeſty of the throne, than the language of juſtice and the deſire of public utility, there ariſes from thence, in every breaſt, a ſoothing reflection that, if the monarch were to be miſled, he would not continue inflexible.

But

But if the law emanates from a ſenate, it ought to be the more ſolemn, in proportion as it muſt be more deliberately weighed and longer debated; and conſequently the legiſlation ought not to deſcend into a detail of the motives which rendered the act expedient. It ſhould appear more imperious than when it proceeds from the mouth of a monarch, becauſe its *inflexible* character muſt be engraved on the mind of every ſubject.

In no caſe can a law diſpenſe with preciſion, reaſon, and clearneſs; when it ſeems dictated by nature, when it addreſſes rational beings, it will be adopted as ſoon as it evinces the pure intentions of government. The citizen, a friend to good order, will rejoice to behold that bleſſing ſecured, whenever its interruption ſhall be provided againſt.

The force of reaſon will ever be the moſt powerful agent in all human legiſlations.

Laws ſhould never threaten; for threats always imply a character of fear or weakneſs. They ſhould ordain calmly, as if they would, when promulged, neceſſarily preclude the poſſibility of prevarication.

The multitude of edicts, of ordinances, of declarations which repeatedly explain and amend each other, mark the embaraſſment of the legiſlator,

giſlator, betray a diſtempered eye, and ſtrip the laws of their dignity, by ſhowing the murky chaos of little public intereſts, which have only one aſpect.

At Naples the law rigorouſly inhibited the liberty of marrying. It was armed with ſeverity. What was the conſequence of this reſtraint? Lovers, conceiving they could neither obtain the conſent of their parents, nor unbend the rigour of the law, fell upon the expedient of pretending a rape; becauſe, by the laws themſelves, the reparation of that crime led directly to marriage. The maid, with her virginity ſtill blooming, complained ſhe had been violated; and as the raviſher muſt either wed or go to the ſcaffold, he eſpouſed her. The Neapolitan legiſlation was obliged to modify the law reſpecting rapes, and to ſignify to the courts, that they were prohibited for the future from receiving any accuſation of a rape, *unleſs it evidently aroſe from a real act of violence.*

When the legiſlation deſcends from its dignity to hinder a colluſion of this nature, it bears its own condemnation. This one had ſet death or ſhame between the two lovers. Public reaſon obliged it to retract; and what can reſiſt that perſuaſive voice?

If the legiſlation attempts to interfere on every

every occaſion, it is guilty of imprudence. There are certain actions which it ought not to know.

Diſtinguiſhed writers diſtribute glory to generous ſovereigns, to able ſtateſmen, to great generals; they thus propagate the names of all privileged beings, and announce them to the univerſe. Then is a nation honoured by theſe eminent authors. Their labors form diſtant conqueſts, and ſubdue the minds of men by the irreſiſtible attractions of beauty, of grandeur, and of truth. The ſtranger, ſeized with juſt admiration, feels more reſpect for the country which produces geniuſes whoſe voice ſpeaks to the whole of Europe; and by a laudable emulation, all the other arts, eager to obtain a brilliant palm, endeavour to ſhare the glory enjoyed by the philoſopher and the man of letters.

But the dazzling exploſion of all the fine arts under Louis XIV. was only a deceitful phantom of public felicity. Theſe arts did not reſult from a ſolid and perfect civilization. National vanity exaggerated the progreſs of theſe pretended maſterpieces; and for a few good verſes, a few ſtatues, and a few pictures, academies were eſtabliſhed, and peopled with artiſts and poets: they were the aſylum of many empty wits, ſeduced by magnificent trifles; and

theſe ſocieties were ſtyled, *the empire of ſciences and of letters*, (the appellation itſelf is ridiculous) while the deep and profitable culture of ſolid and uſeful knowledge was abandoned to neighbours unknown and undervalued. In theſe academies, no citizens were to be found, but innumerable bigots; few men, and not one philoſopher.

The French, under Louis XIV. plunged into illuſions of vanity, were perpetually ſtrangers to the political and civil blunders of the age. They cultivated the flowers of thoſe arts which ſeduce; but they ſaw not germinating elſewhere thoſe manly and generous ideas which conſtitute liberty, that liberty which they conſidered, and often ſtill conſider, as a chimera. They took the ſhadow for the ſubſtance.

Racine, for having compoſed a *memoire* in favour of the people, incurred the indignation of Louis XIV. Fenelon was irretrievably proſcribed by the haughty monarch who probably recogniſed himſelf in ſome pages of Telemachus. The French academy, worthily devoted to the pride of its protector, ſtampt on the ſhoots of *immortality*, expelled from its body the Abbé Saint-Pierre, the only patriotic member it could boaſt.

A paſſion for wit always ſpoils the conſtitu-

tion

tion of a nation; it destroys in man that inward firmness of sentiment which nourishes liberty. The man of fancy has more whimsies than others; he weds, he caresses a chimera; his imagination enters with too much warmth upon objects foreign to the public welfare. An artificial taste occupies the place of a taste genuine and solid.

FINE ARTS.

THE fine arts, properly directed, maintain peace, promote virtue, and confirm the civilization and police of a people. When they rest upon political establishments, and are blended with social institutions, their effect is great and generous; they are the flowers of human societies, which conceal delicious fruits.

The fine arts enter into the constitution of a good government, because they beget exquisite enjoyments; and, by inspiring a taste for the beautiful, raise and swell the human soul.

The internal strength of political bodies corresponds to the works of art; and the rules which prescribe grace, harmony, and delicate proportion, extend insensibly to all the rest.

The

The cultivation of the fine arts impreffes, therefore, on a government a phyfiognomy at once gentle and refpectable. Writers of the firft order are claffed among thofe whom all nations cherifh. The kingdom that produced them claims regard; and, as they widely diffufe inftruction and pleafure, gratitude flows back to the centre which they inhabit: for mankind reap fatisfaction in ftudy, in the acquifition of knowledge, and in the improvement of the underftanding.

The orators of Athens dazzled the people with the fprightly turns and harmonious periods of their dangerous rhetoric. The Athenians miftook the true interefts of their country.

A nation difpofed to wit is vain, and blinded by a chain of fpecious arguments; it exhaufts all its national advantages in the compofition of lively pamphlets and fmart epigrams. Self love torments it; and when its political condition is debafed, it refts contented with being the firft among learned nations. He who would have been an excellent general, vitiated by a fprightly fancy, prides himfelf on being a complete courtier.

END OF VOL. I.

MAHARAJA